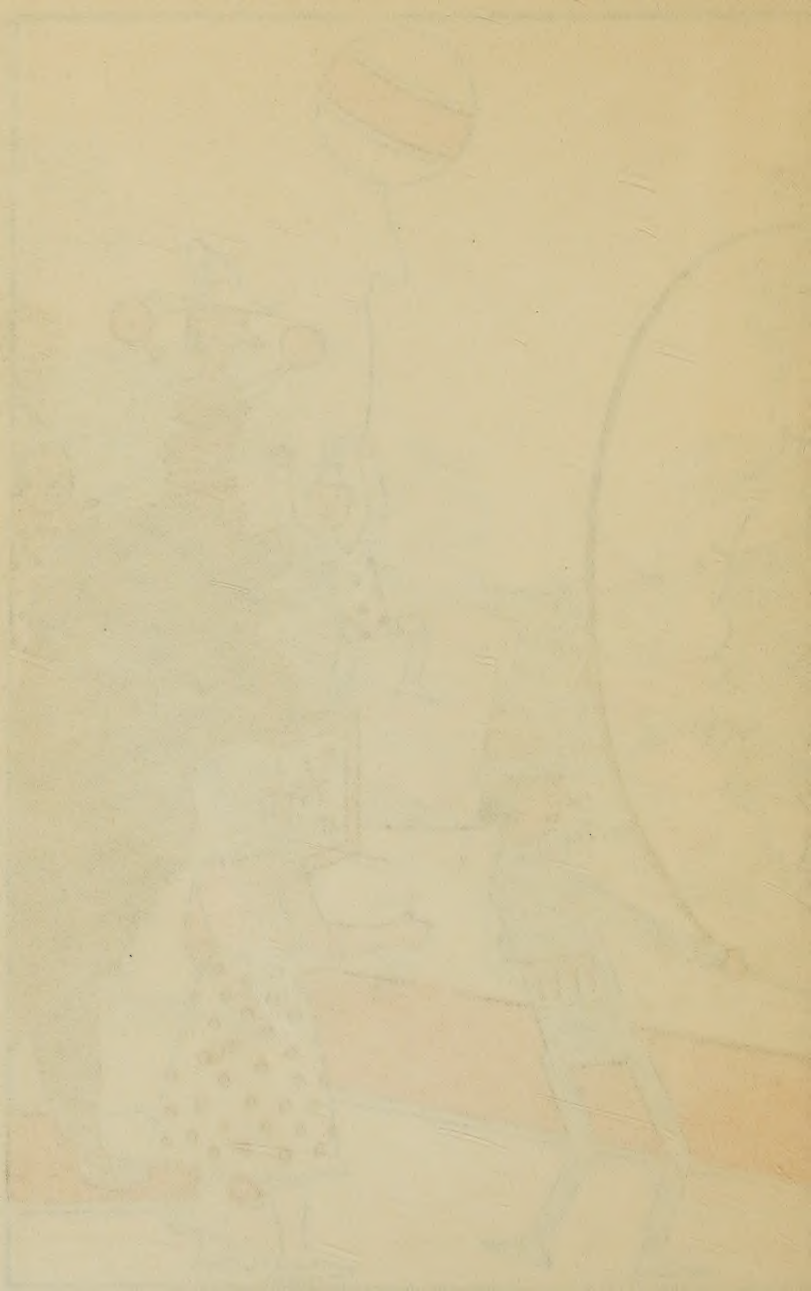
PUSS-IN-BOOTS, JR. IN FAIRYLAND

BY DAVID CORY



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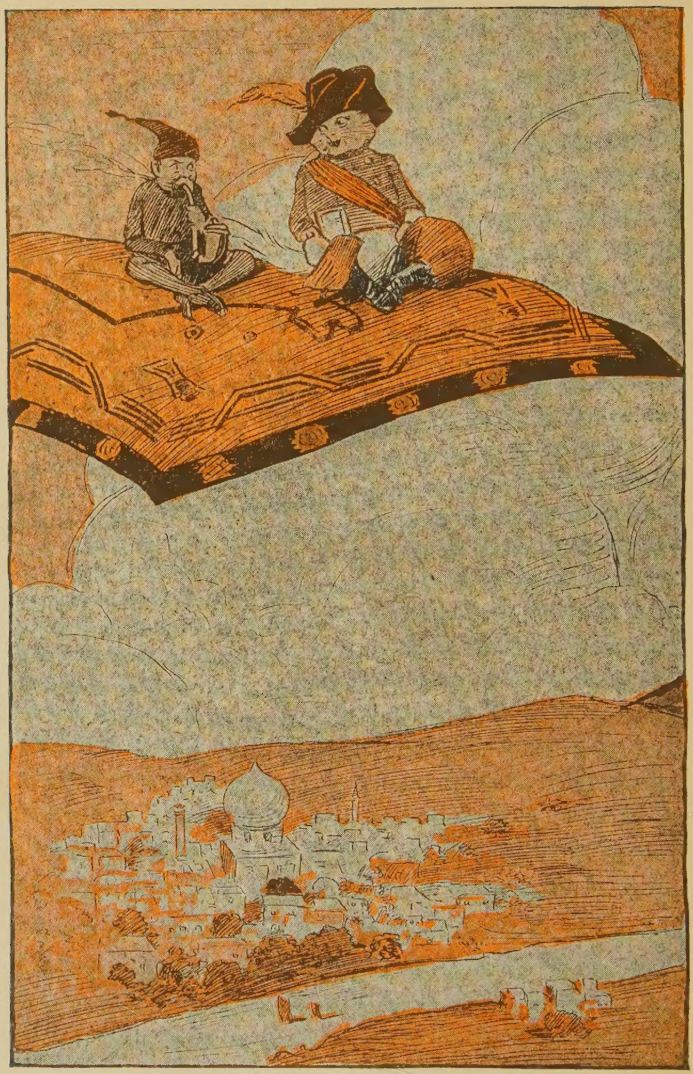

PUSS JUNIOR TRAVELS ON THE MAGIC RUG.

Puss-in-Boots, Jr. in Fairyland. *Frontispiece.*

PUSS IN BOOTS, JR. IN FAIRYLAND

BY

DAVID CORY

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LITTLE JACK RABBIT BOOKS,
LITTLE JOURNEYS TO HAPPYLAND,
PUSS IN BOOTS BOOKS, Etc

PROFUSELY ILLUSTRATED

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PUSS IN BOOTS, JR. IN FAIRYLAND

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PUSS IN BOOTS, JR. IN FAIRY-LAND

THE MAGIC RUG

WELL, as the Magic Rug sailed on and on, as I mentioned in the story-book before this, Puss said to the funny little man who was the owner of the rug, you remember:

"Where are we going?"

"Just wait and see," replied the funny little man, who, by the way, had a red turban on his head and a long pipe in his mouth. And the smoke that came out of the pipe made it almost seem to Puss as if he were on a train of cars, with an engine puffing and snorting in the front.

"Yes, you just wait and see," the funny little man repeated. "If we always knew where we were going there'd be very little fun in going sometimes." Well,

after a while they came to a big city with tall spires with great big immense bells, and carved lions and horses in the squares where fountains spouted and bands played.

And pretty soon after that the Magic Rug came

down to the sidewalk as gently as you please and Puss jumped off and stretched his legs, for he had sat cross-legged all the while, you know, just like a Turk, and so had the funny little man.

"This is Babylon," said the owner of the Magic Rug. "You are in a strange city, Sir Cat. And Mother Goose Country is many miles away."

And just then a parrot in a great big gold cage began to sing:

"Over the hills and over the sea
The Magic Rug has brought you to me,
I am the Parrot that talks like a man,
So hark to the language I speak, if you can.
Polly wants crackers, and maybe some cheese,
So pass the refreshments at once, if you please."

But of course Puss didn't have anything to eat with him, so he stepped into a little shop near by and bought some sweet crackers and cheese, and the Parrot was so delighted that she gave him a blue feather out of her tail to put in his cap.

And after that the funny little man rolled up his Magic Rug and placed it under his arm. "Now come with me," he said to Puss, "and you shall see the loveliest princess in the world." So Puss followed, and by and by they came to a castle with great high gates, and when the funny little man touched them with the fringe of his Magic Rug they swung open. So he and Puss walked in, and the first thing they saw were two beautiful peacocks with tails like fans.

"What is your errand?" asked the larger peacock, and he fanned his tail back and forth till Puss, Junior's, hat nearly blew off.

"I would take my friend, Puss in Boots, Junior, to see the beautiful princess," replied the funny little man.

And in the story after this you shall hear what happened next.

ACROSS THE RIVER DEE

"OH, this is the son of the famous Puss in Boots," said the peacock, who, you remember, in the last story guarded the gates of the castle where lived the beautiful princess.

"I think the princess is on her throne this very minute, so if you make haste you will see her," and the peacock beckoned to Puss and the funny little man, who still had his Magic Rug under his arm, and let me say right here that it was a very lucky thing that he didn't let go of it, for something happened very soon. But, there, I'm getting ahead of my story.

Well, pretty soon they were inside the castle and Puss saw seated on a throne the lovely princess, and when she saw Puss she jumped down and ran toward him.

"Oh, I'm so glad you came," she cried, "for I have a story-book called *Puss in Boots*, and now to meet his son gives me the greatest of pleasure," and then she made Puss sit up on the throne beside her.

Well, everything was going along beautifully when, all of a sudden, there came a tremendous knocking

at the castle doors, and in less time than I can tell it to you a crowd of robbers rushed in. And they were just about to carry the princess away, when the funny little man spread his Magic Rug at her feet

and whispered, "Stand upon it!" The next moment up rose the Magic Rug and sailed out of the great open window just behind the throne. And of course the robbers set up a great shouting, but they couldn't do anything, for the Magic Rug was soon out of sight and far away across the River Dee that separates Mother Goose Country from Fairy-land.

"It will be safer for us to return to Mother Goose Country," said the funny little man, "until those wicked robbers are caught, for they are bent on making a prisoner of this lovely lady." But the little princess said nothing. I guess she was homesick at the thought of leaving her lovely throne. Well, anyway, pretty soon the Magic Rug stopped before a lowly cottage on a hill where lived a kind shepherd who had many sheep. But when he saw such a strange sight as three people riding on a rug, he ran into the hut to tell his wife.

"Gracious me!" exclaimed the good woman, "am I dreaming?"

And then the lovely princess said: "We will not harm you. We have but just escaped from a band of robbers!"

"Come into the hut," said the kind shepherd, and Puss and the lovely princess and the funny little man went inside.

Over in one corner of the room was a cradle in which the shepherd woman's baby lay asleep. So the lovely princess tiptoed over to the cradle and sang this lullaby:

"Sleep, baby, sleep,
While daddy tends the sheep
Beside the gently flowing stream.
Rest, little one, and sleep and dream."

And in the next story you shall hear what became of the lovely princess.

CIRCUS FRIENDS

WELL, after the lovely princess had finished singing to the shepherd's baby, as I told you in the last story, there came across the meadow the clear, sharp note of a horn, and pretty soon a number of horsemen rode up.

"Is the princess here?" asked the leader, for the kind shepherd had stepped outside on hearing them approach.

"Yes, she is inside," he replied, with a low bow.

And then the princess herself came to the door, and when she saw them, she cried with delight, "Brother mine, where did you come from?" For the tall, handsome leader was her brother, you see, and had a beautiful kingdom in Mother Goose Country. And after that he took her on his horse and rode away. And then the funny little man seated himself on his Magic Rug and flew away, so that Puss was left all alone with the kind shepherd and his wife.

Well, after a while Puss said good-by and continued his journey of adventure, and as he trudged along he came to a great circus tent in a big field. The band was playing and the flags flying, and now and then the

roar of the wild animals came down the wind. But that didn't frighten Puss. For don't you remember he once belonged to a circus? Of course you do. And would you believe it, as soon as he got close enough to the tent he saw his old friend the Circus Clown standing outside talking to the Circus Queen.

"Come right into the tent and see your big white horse," she cried, catching Puss by the paw and dragging him into the tan-bark ring. And there stood the big white horse, and when he saw Puss, Junior, he whinnied and neighed, and then he began to talk. Yes, sir, he did! And the first thing he said was, "Get on my back, little comrade, and take a turn around the ring, for it seems like old times again." And Puss jumped on his back and stood first on one leg and then on the other, and rode around and around just as if he had been doing that sort of thing all his life. And you should have heard the people cry out "Bravo!" which means "Splendid!" you know, for the tent was just full of people who had paid fifty cents to see the show and a lot of nickels to drink lemonade and eat peanuts.

And when it was all over, Puss sat down on a bench outside the tent and told the Circus People all that had happened to him since he last saw them. And after that the Twinkle, Twinkle Star came out and shone down on a little side tent where the Circus Queen's baby was asleep. And then the Clown came and stood by the door and looked in, for he was its father, you know, and while Puss and the Circus Queen tiptoed

inside, the Twinkle, Twinkle Star began singing this little song:

"Sleep, little baby in the white tent.
Your mother is Queen of the show,
But she doesn't care for any one there
As much as your little pink toe.
Your little red mouth she loves best, I know,
Than all the applause in the big circus show."

And then she leaned over the cradle and said, "Some day, littlest boy, you'll grow up to be a funny clown like your father, and you'll paint your face white with big red marks on both cheeks, but I'll love you just as much. Oh, yes, I will!"

Then Puss, Junior, cuddled up on a big pillow and went to sleep, and in the morning the baby, laughing and cooing, awoke him. And would you believe it, the baby wanted to play with him all day, and cried when he went out of the tent. So you see how fond everybody is of Puss in Boots, Junior, even the little babies who can only say goo-goo and double up their fists, and sometimes cry—but the good ones only cry when they are hungry, so I'm told by all loving mothers.

"Won't you stay with us and ride the big white horse?" asked the Circus Clown the next morning. But Puss said, "No, I must be on my way, for I have got the wanderlust," which means the love of wandering from place to place. So the Circus People gave Puss the big white horse to ride away on.

In the next story you shall hear some more adventures which befell little Puss, Junior.

THE CONTENTED PIG

AS Puss, Junior, rode along on the big white circus horse he came across a little girl who was crying bitterly. At first he thought she was little Bo-Peep, but just then that little yellow bird whose name I'm going to tell you some day commenced singing:

"Little Bo-Polly has lost her dolly,
And cannot tell where to find her:
Let her alone and she'll come home
With her two little braids behind her.

"Little Bo-Polly was very jolly
Until she lost her pet.
Then what could she do but cry boo-hoo
Till her pretty blue eyes were wet?

"Then back she went on finding bent
Her precious little token.
She found her, indeed, but it made her heart bleed,
For dolly's leg was broken.

"She gave a sigh and wiped her eye,
And ran till her journey was ended,
And tried best she could, as a little girl should,
To have poor dolly's leg mended.

"To the doctor next day she took dolly straightway,
Who easily mended her limb.
And then after that she bought dolly a hat
With blue ribbon bound round the brim."

"I am always forgetting that this is New Mother Goose Land," said Puss, and then he turned to the

little girl and told her not to cry any more, but do just as the little yellow bird said, which made the little girl feel ever so much better.

And I guess she did, for I heard afterward that dolly was as good as new and that little Bo-Polly was as happy as could be.

"Where shall we go now, my good circus horse?" asked Puss, Junior, and the faithful animal replied:

"I will carry you, little master, to yonder town. Do you not see the church spire rising above the tree-

tops?" So by and by they came to a village where the blacksmith put a new shoe on the circus horse and the cobbler a heel on Puss, Junior's, left boot, for it had come off the day before. And while they stood outside the cobbler's shop who should come by but the Pig Without a Wig, the pig, you remember, whom Puss had met on the way to Zenner. And when he saw the little hero he took off his silk hat and bowed, and do you know, he wasn't bald any more. No, sirree! He had a lot of lovely hair on the top of his head and he told Puss that ever since the day he had moved to New Mother Goose Country he had to have his hair cut twice a week. Wasn't that curious? It only goes to show what a change in climate will do for a pig.

"Are you happy?" asked Puss, for he had grown wise enough to know that happiness is everything in this world.

"Well, I should say so," replied the pig, placing his silk hat carefully on his head and winking at the circus horse, who smiled as only a horse can. "Mrs. Pig and I have five little pigs and a house in the country, and next month I'm going to buy an automobile."

And in the next story I'll tell you how happy Puss was to meet an old friend.

PUSS BUYS A SUNBONNET

"I DON'T know where I have seen you before,"
Said a little gray mouse, as she stood in her door.
"But I'm sure you're a cat who won't harm a mouse
Who lives all alone in her little green house."

"No indeed," laughed Puss, Junior. It was early morning and he was riding along on his circus horse. In fact, he had been riding all night, only he had been asleep all that time, for he had closed his eyes when the Whip-po'-will sang her song about the little white cloud with its soft white breast that went to sleep on the mountain's crest.

"Well, I'm glad to hear you say that," said the little mouse, "and now, when I look at your red-top boots and your good circus horse, I think I recall the time when you chased me over the meadow one day, oh, so long ago, and I ran into a hollow log to hide."

'So you did," laughed Puss. "Let me see your tail."

'I haven't any," replied the little mouse. "'The farmer's wife with her carving-knife cut it off a long time ago."

"Oh yes, I remember it all now," said little Puss, Junior. "It was at the farm where the Cackle, Cackle Hen laid nice eggs for gentlemen, and gentlemen came every day to see the eggs she'd laid away."

"That's the place," said the little mouse as she closed the door to her little green house and ran underneath the good circus horse, who whinnied and gave his head a toss.

"Whoa, there!" cried Puss. "Don't jump or you'll throw me out of the saddle."

"Sorry, little master," replied his faithful steed, "but that little mouse makes me nervous. She might tickle my leg." But he needn't have been afraid, for the little mouse had run across the road and was sitting up on the fence rail, looking out from under her pink sunbonnet at Puss, Junior.

"Can I do anything for you?" he asked. "I must be going, but if you are in need of anything let me know."

"You're very kind," she replied. "If you come to a shop where they keep sunbonnets, won't you send me one, for mine has a hole in the top and the sun strikes through and gives me a headache."

"I will gladly do so," replied Puss, and then he lifted his cap and rode away, and by and by he came to a millinery shop, so he went in and looked over the sunbonnets.

"That pink one with the yellow dots is the one I like best," he said, and he ordered it to be sent to "Miss Mouse, Green House by the Roadside." And the big fat duck who owned the shop smiled and said, "This is the first time I remember a gentleman cat sending a sunbonnet to a mouse."

And in the next story if that sunbonnet doesn't fit little Miss Mouse I'll send her another.

A LETTER FROM HOME

WELL, the sunbonnet did fit little Miss Mouse, so I didn't have to send her another, as I said I might in the last story. So Puss, Junior, continued his journey and by and by as he jogged along on his circus horse a Carrier Pigeon flew up and gave him a letter.

And on the envelope was written in his father's handwriting, "Master Puss in Boots, Junior, Somewhere, New Mother Goose Land."

"Whoa!" cried our little traveler. "Let's rest a moment beneath these shady trees while I read this letter from my dear father." Then the Carrier Pigeon settled herself on a branch overhead and the circus horse nibbled the green grass while Puss, Junior, opened the envelope and read:

MY DEAR, DEAR SON:

This is to tell you that I am well, but miss you. When you have seen the world remember that home is here and your father waiting for his little Puss, Junior.

Affectionately,

FATHER PUSS IN BOOTS.

"It is good to hear from home," sighed the small traveler, and he put the letter back into the envelope and placed it in the pocket of his coat. And after that he set off once more upon his journey, and by and by he came to a big hollow tree in which lived a little dwarf who earned his living by gathering poppies and selling them to people who couldn't sleep at night. Of course they were grown-up people, for children never have any trouble about sleeping, for the kind Sandman who always comes at night-time sees to that, you know.

"Helloa, Sir Cat!" cried the dwarf. "Do you sleep at night? For if you don't, I will sell you a big red poppy, and you know that poppies make people sleep."

"Do they make one dream?" asked little Puss, Junior.

"Yes, indeed, my good Sir Cat," answered the dwarf, picking a poppy out of his basket and handing it to the little traveler. "This poppy will give you a wonderful dream. Smell its perfume when you go to bed to-night and you will dream of wonderful things."

"Thank you," said Puss, taking the flower and placing it in his buttonhole. "I will do as you say when evening comes. Until then, may I sit down by you and rest?" And then he told the dwarf all about his adventure, and when he had finished it was evening. So he curled up on some dry leaves with the big red poppy close beside him and had a wonderful dream. Now it really wasn't the poppy that brought the

dream to Puss. Oh my, no. It was a little bird with pink wings and a blue breast. She was called the Dream Bird in New Mother Goose Land and she always came around just as the Twinkle, Twinkle Star was peeping from the sky. And the first thing she did was to sing her dream song, and this is the way it went:

"Here's a little dream for you
From the bird with breast of blue.
Listen, while I sing it low,
While the tiny fireflies glow.
Close your tired eyes and sleep,
While the shadows, tiptoe, creep."

And then Puss, Junior, dreamed that he was back once more with his father, the famous Puss in Boots, in the castle of my Lord of Carabas, and he was fishing in the moat for little minnows, and he was just about to pull one out and eat it when he awoke with a start to find it was morning and that he was far, far away. So he rubbed his eyes and pulled on his red-top boots and stood up. And the big red poppy which he had fastened in his buttonhole was faded and didn't look pretty any more, so he threw it away and started off on foot to find his breakfast, for the big circus horse had gone back to the circus.

THE FROG KING

WELL, the next morning, as soon as Puss, Junior, threw away the dream poppy flower, he saw Mother Goose on her Gander flying through the air. And by and by she came nearer and nearer and pretty soon the Gander flew down to the ground.

"Good morning, Mother Goose," said Puss, Junior, and he was so delighted to meet her again that he almost forgot to take off his hat.

"'Tis hard traveling by foot," said old Mother Goose, kindly. "Won't you ride with me on my fast Gander over this high mountain?"

"Is there room to spare?" asked Puss, politely.

"Yes, indeed, my little cat. He has a broad back and a stout pair of wings." And then Mother Goose began to croon:

"Old Mother Goose, when she wishes to fly,
Rides her gander over the sky,
Through the white clouds and the sunbeams and rain,
Fast as a comet and swift as a train,
Over the steeples and over the trees,
And over the mountains as safe as you please."

And would you believe it, when she finished singing they had crossed over the great high mountain.

So he thanked Mother Goose and set off through the woods, and by and by he came to a deep pool under a great oak-tree. But he didn't know that a Frog King lived in it. No, sirree. And perhaps it was just as well that he didn't, for the Frog King didn't like cats at all.

Well, as Puss, Junior, was tired and thirsty, he drank the cool water and then lay down to rest. And then, all of a sudden, a voice began singing in a deep, croaky way:

"I'm king of this pool,
And my throne's a footstool,
And my subjects are queer little frogs;
But remember this thing,
While I croakingly sing,
You'll never get out of these bogs."

And the Frog King looked at Puss with a very ugly grin, for he wasn't a nice kind of a frog at all. But Puss wasn't the least bit frightened. No, indeed, for he had been in dangerous places many times before; so he turned to the frog and said, bravely:

"Would you harm the son of the famous Puss in Boots?"

And when the Frog King heard this he nearly fell off his toadstool throne and his crown dropped into the pool with a big splash, and then he gave a great, big, mournful croak. "Oh, gracious me, and, oh, woe

is me!" You see, as long as he had his crown on his head he was a king, but just as soon as he didn't, why, of course, he was just an ordinary kind of a frog and nobody feared him.

So he jumped into the water and dived down to the bottom of the deep black pool. And all this time Puss, Junior, stood there looking at him and the big circle in the water which the frog had made when he jumped in.

Well, by and by, he came to the surface, but without his crown. And he was very unhappy, for he knew that nobody would believe he was a king any more. So he turned to Puss, Junior, and asked him to get it for him.

"Why should I do that for you?" asked the little traveler. "Only a few minutes ago you looked at me with a grin and said that I'd never get out of this bog."

"I'll promise to show you a safe path if you'll only get my crown for me," croaked the Frog King, sadly.

And just then a Silver Trout swam up and said: "I'll get the crown for you, Sir Cat, for my cousin, who lives in the moat at the castle of my Lord of Carabas, is very fond of your famous father, Puss in Boots." And with these words the Silver Trout disappeared below the surface, and returned shortly with the Frog King's crown in his mouth.

And wasn't the Frog happy. Well, you should have seen him. He danced around and sang this song:

"Oh, I'm as happy as can be,
For I'm a king once more.
To be an ordinary frog
Would be an awful bore.
You'd never guess the dreadful pain
That smote my kingly heart
When in the depths of this deep pool
I saw my crown depart."

And after that he said, "Come with me and I'll show you a safe way out of this bog," and then he hopped away, and Puss, Junior, after him, and by and by they came to the King's Highway.

"Keep to this road until you come to a high hill, and then ask a little Red Ant who lives by the stone wall which way to turn. Good luck and a safe journey to you," and with these parting words the Frog King turned home, after taking off his crown and bowing most politely to the little traveler.

"Well, he was a most obliging king," said Puss, Junior, to himself, "very obliging, especially considering he was a king, although only a frog," and away went Sir Puss down the road.

And in the next story I'll tell you what happened when he met the little Red Ant.

THE DIAMOND PIN

NOW, when Puss, Junior, came to the foot of the great, high hill, he looked all around for the Red Ant who the Frog King said would tell him the road to Fairy-land. And pretty soon he found her, but it took him some time, for she was very small and her house was nothing more than a little mound of earth with a round hole in the middle for a door.

"You had better follow the river," she said, pointing to a silver stream that wound in and out among the trees, "for it flows into Fairy-land." And just then who should come by but Goosey, Goosey Gander.

"Come, let us travel together," said Puss, and this, of course, delighted the Gander, for he was dreadfully lonely at Dame Trot's Inn and felt sure she was feeding him with lots of nice things just to make him fat for Christmas.

So off they started, and the Gander said: "Why don't you ride on my back and I will fly? I'd much rather than walk." Well, as soon as Puss was seated on Goosey Gander's broad back, away he went flying through the air almost as swiftly as a swallow and by

and by they crossed a meadow where a big silver spoon was being chased by a big round dish.

"Hey diddle diddle,
The cat and the fiddle;
The cow jumped over the moon,
The little dog laughed to see such sport,
While the dish ran away with the spoon."

And then Puss laughed so hard that he fell off Goosey Gander's back and hurt his leg. And that silly old Goose was so scared that he flew home as fast as he could. Well, Puss didn't know what to do, so he tooted on a little tin horn and then up came an old dog (Old Dog Tray was his name, I think), and as soon as he saw Puss, Junior, he said: "I'm the son of Old Mother Hubbard's Dog. Get on my back and I'll carry you to my house in the woods."

So Puss climbed up on his back and a little owl came along, too, and by and by they came to a little dog-house under a big spreading chestnut-tree where Old Dog Tray roasted chestnuts and sold them to the children in the autumn.

And pretty soon Puss was made very comfortable and his sprained leg was bound up in a soft cloth and he was given a plate of fish, which he loved more than candy or ice-cream.

"You can stay here as long as you like," said Old Dog Tray, taking out his pipe and smoking it, while the little owl hunted around for mice, of which he

was very fond. But the little mice stayed in their hole in the pantry and never came out, so the owl had to be contented with a piece of cheese which they had left in a funny little round trap because they were

afraid to pull it out. Weren't they wise little mice, though? Well, I just guess they were.

But don't forget that Puss, Junior, loved to travel, and a traveler, you know, is ever restless. He wants to be going, going all the time, so as soon as his leg got well Puss, Junior, thanked Old Dog Tray and set

off once more. And the owl went with him, for he liked Puss, Junior, and why shouldn't he? And you will know why when I tell you he was the owl who went sailing in the beautiful pea-green boat. Yes, he was the same little owl who had rescued Puss once before from the wicked Giant of the Bean-stalk. And I think it's awfully nice to have Puss, Junior, meet all his old friends now and then—don't you?—for who wants to lose a friend? Nobody does, I'm sure.

Well, Puss, Junior, and the owl traveled on and on through the shady wood until they came to a cave where there lived a dwarf whose name was Wrinkle Face, for his face was just full of wrinkles, although his eyes were bright as stars. And when he saw Puss, Junior, he laughed a funny little squeaky laugh and said, "Puss in Boots, Junior, as sure as I'm a foot high," which was pretty near the truth, for he was just thirteen inches, and that's only one inch more than a foot, you know.

"What can I do for you, Sir Cat?" he asked, with a wrinkly, crinkly smile, and Puss said he didn't know. So the dwarf said, "I'll show you my cave, for it's full of beautiful diamonds and rubies, and if you like me perhaps I'll give you a diamond." So he took Puss and the owl inside his curious cave and gave him a beautiful diamond pin, which was very kind of him, I think, even if he did have lots and lots of them.

LITTLE RED RIDING-HOOD

WELL, just as Puss, Junior, was placing the diamond pin in his tie which the dwarf had given him in the last story, you remember, a gruff voice called out:

"I am a robber fierce and bold,
And I love to steal another man's gold.
So give me that beautiful diamond pin
Or I'll put you in prison till you grow thin,
Till you grow thin as a wisp of hay.
So hand me that diamond pin, I say."

But do you think Puss, Junior, handed that bad robber the beautiful diamond pin? No, sirree, he didn't. Instead he drew his sword and said, fiercely:

"I am the son of Puss in Boots,
So beware of my sword so bright.
Be off or I'll run you through and through,
For I'm not afraid to fight."

And would you believe it, that robber turned and fled, he was so frightened, and this made the little owl laugh so loud that he lost his voice and couldn't

say a word for a week. And then the little dwarf said: "You are indeed a brave cat. Stay with me and protect my treasures and I will give you half."

But Puss, Junior, replied that he must seek his fortune in another way, for, said he, "I must win my treasure and not have it given me." Which is the right way, after all, for who wants to be beholden to any man? So off went little Puss, Junior, to seek more adventures, leaving the dwarf and the little owl in the shady wood.

And by and by it began to rain, and just then, all of a sudden, a little yellow bird began to sing:

"What do I care for a little rain?
It washes off each dusty stain;
It makes my feathers clean and sleek,
So I can curl them with my beak."

And where do you suppose this little bird was? Well, you'd never guess, so I will have to tell you. He was in a little house close to a forest, and all around this little house grew lovely hollyhocks, pink and blue and white, and over the front porch climbed a rose-vine and in the kitchen garden, along the back wall, was a row of sunflowers. And, oh, dear me, wasn't it a pretty spot! And it would have been just the sort of place to spend a vacation in if it hadn't been that the little house belonged to a bold, bad robber. And wasn't it strange, he was the same robber who tried to steal the diamond pin.

Every night, when the tall shadows crept into the

forest, he would go out and wait for travelers, and if they didn't give him their money he would take it from them whether they liked it or not.

Now when Puss found this out he was very angry, and that very evening he crept out of the house, and by and by he heard a scream, and what do you suppose was the matter? Why, the wicked robber had caught Little Red Riding-Hood and had taken away her basket of good things which she was taking to her poor old sick grandmother.

"Give back that basket," shouted Puss, "or I will run you through with my trusty sword." And the robber was so frightened that he gave the basket to Little Red Riding-Hood, and Puss, Junior, helped her carry it to her poor old grandmother.

Now, her old grandmother was knitting helmets for the soldier boys in the war, and when she heard that Puss, Junior, was in the house, she wanted to meet him at once, for she knew he was the son of the famous Puss in Boots. And of course Puss wanted to meet her, for he knew that old women always like cats, and even if they didn't, they would like Puss, Junior, I am sure, for he was a wonderful cat, as you no doubt know by this time.

"I'm very glad to see you," said the nice old lady, and she patted him and said he had lovely red-topped boots, which pleased him immensely, and after that he went upon his way.

And in the next story I'll tell you about a Weather-cock who sang a New Mother Goose Melody.

PIGGIE PORKER

WELL, after Puss left Little Red Riding-Hood, as I told you in the last story, he trudged merrily along, for it was a beautiful bright morning and he was feeling very fine, was this little traveler, and by and by he came to an old farm. And just as he turned the corner of the barn he heard the Weathercock on the roof sing this New Mother Goose Melody:

"Georgy Porgy, pudding and pie,
Teased the piggies in the sty.
When the mother pig came out
Georgy quickly turned about."

And he would have run into Puss, Junior, if our little traveler hadn't stepped to one side.

"Helloa! Who are you?" asked Georgy Porgy, staring at little Puss, Junior's, red-top boots.

"A traveler who is thirsty," he replied. "Can you give me a cool drink of water?"

So Georgy Porgy led the way to the old well where the moss-covered bucket took turns in bringing up the water from the cool depths. And then he took the tin dipper and filled it and gave Puss a drink.

"I think your red-top boots are beautiful," said the little boy. "Where are you going?"

"Oh, I'm a traveler. I go where the winds blow."

And just then there came a loud squeaking from the sty and Puss saw the head of a small pig looking over the side of the pen.

"Why, it's Piggie Porker!" cried the little traveler, and he lifted the little pig over the fence.

"Oh, take me away!" he cried. "Georgy Porgy teases me all the time." Now this made Puss, Junior, very angry, for he was fond of Piggie Porker, and although it was a long time since he had rescued him from Tom, the Piper's Son, he hadn't forgotten him. "Come with me," said Puss, and without another word he and the little pig left the farm-yard and walked down the shady lane. And as they passed through the gate little Robin Red Breast looked down from his nest and sang this song:

"Good-by, Piggie Porker. A pleasant trip to you.
Hope you meet Red Riding-Hood and Little Boy in Blue.
Tell them I've a little nest in the apple-tree,
Crowded full of little birds longing to be free.
When their wings grow strong enough they shall fly away.
Good-by, Piggie Porker, till we meet some day."

And then little Jenny Wren flew by, and a big darning-needle—which is a kind of insect, you know, only she doesn't know how to sew—and the Cow that Jumped over the Moon looked over the old snake fence and said, "Good-by, Piggie Porker."

THUNDERVOICE

ONE day Puss, Junior, came to a high mountain, and as he was tired and thirsty, he looked about him for a place to rest and something to drink, and in a few minutes he spied a little spring gushing right out of a rock. And close by, not a foot away, sat a little Fairy dressed in green. "I am the spirit of the water," she cried, waving a silver wand in the air.

"May I take a drink from your spring?" asked Puss, Junior, politely; but he didn't drink a drop, for he was afraid she might not like it.

"Of course you may," she replied, "but only one gobletful, and she handed him a beautiful crystal glass. And as soon as he had tasted the water his weariness left him and he felt refreshed.

"Now," said the little Fairy, "don't you climb up that mountain, for on the top lives a Giant whose name is Thundervoice, and he'll scare you to death and maybe deafen you."

"Never fear, my kind little Fairy," answered the little hero. "I once met the Giant of the Bean-stalk, so why should I fear the Giant of the Mountain?" And he bowed to the Fairy of the Spring and started

up the mountain. And by and by he heard a dreadful noise. The mountain shook and trembled and the air rushed by like a hurricane, and the trees bent and

the grasses shivered, and great pieces of rock tumbled down into the valley below.

"I guess old Thundervoice is talking to himself," said the little hero, with a laugh. Which shows he wasn't afraid, doesn't it?

And then who should come in sight but the Giant himself? And he was so tall and big that Puss couldn't

see the top of his head, and neither could the Giant unless he looked in his wife's mirror.

"Where did you come from, kitten?" asked the dreadful big man in a thunderous tone, which almost blew off Puss, Junior's, hat.

"I am Puss in Boots, Junior, and you can't frighten me!"

"Rum, rum! Dum, dum!" yelled the Giant, and the feather on little pussy cat's hat blew off and drifted down the wind until it caught on a fir-tree. "How dare you speak to me like that? No one ever did before and lived to tell the tale!" And he rushed at Puss and tried to catch him. But Puss darted to one side and drew his sword, and when the Giant saw that he laughed again, and said: "You are a brave little cat. Come to my castle and I promise you no harm shall befall you."

So Puss went with him, and when they entered the Giant's home a little gray dove flew out and lighted on his shoulder and cooed. And the big Giant stroked its pretty feathers so softly that Puss thought to himself, "This Giant can't be so very wicked, after all, if he loves that little bird," and he wasn't the least bit afraid, but sat down on a chair while the Giant hung up his great cap on a wooden peg and wound the clock.

And in the next story you shall hear more about Puss, Junior, at the Giant's castle.

PUSS RELATES AN ADVENTURE

IN the story before this I left Puss, Junior, in the Giant's castle, you remember, and I'll tell you right now I hated to do it, and if that dear little yellow bird hadn't told me that the Giant was really a very kind man I should have been worried to death.

"Now, what will you have to eat, kitten?" asked the Giant, with a grin.

"Give me a saucer of cream and a piece of fish," said Puss, and he curled his whiskers and flicked a piece of dust off his red-topped boots as if he had always been used to dining with giants and other big people.

And after supper the Giant took out his great pipe and smoked until the air was so cloudy that the little dove couldn't be seen at all. And after a little while Puss stroked his whiskers and crossed his leg, and then he commenced to tell one of his adventures:

"Once upon a time there was a little cat who lived in a big white house. And one day he went into the garret, and the first thing he saw was a story-book. It was a very pretty story-book, and on the cover was the picture of a cat with red-topped boots. And the

name of the book was *Puss in Boots.* Well, as soon as this little cat saw the picture on the cover he said to himself, 'That must be the portrait of my father, for the picture looks very much like me.' So he

hunted around, and would you believe it, he found a pair of boots with red tops and a cane and a hat with a long feather in it. So off he started to find his father, for he said to himself, 'If I look just like the picture on the cover, why, it will be possible for me to find the original of that portrait, and if it turns out to be my father how happy I shall be!'

"So off he went, down the road, and by and by he met some Mother Goose friends. You see, he was in

Mother Goose Country, but at first he didn't know it. There was the Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe, and the Jolly Miller who caught a flea upon his pillow, and Old Mother Hubbard and her Dog, and Little Bo-Peep, and the Cow that Jumped Over the Moon. And so many more that I can't tell them to you now, for if I did, my story would never end.

"Well, by and by, after a little while, he came to a town where Wee Willie Winkle put the children to sleep. And it was just about dusk as this little cat entered the city. And the first thing he saw was a small boy in his nightdress running through the streets with a candle in his hand. So the little cat followed him, and pretty soon Wee Willie Winkle ran up the steps in front of a pretty cottage and peeked through the keyhole, and then he began to sing:

"'Time for bed; it's eight o' peep.
Jump in bed and go to sleep.
Willie Winkle's at the door;
He won't wait a minute more.
Close your eyes and dream away;
You've been playing all the day.'

"And then Wee Willie Winkle ran down the street to another house where there were more little boys and girls."

As Puss finished his story, he looked up, and, goodness me! the Giant was snoring, so Puss curled himself up and was soon fast asleep, and if he wakes up in time to-morrow morning I'll tell you another story about him.

DICKORY, DICKORY DARE

YOU remember in the last story I left Puss fast asleep in the Giant's house. Well, the next morning he said good-by and went merrily on his way, hoping for a new adventure, and when he had gone only a short distance whom should he meet but Mother Goose and her Gander, and wasn't he glad to see the dear old lady again!

"You're just in time to take a sky ride with me," she said, and then Puss jumped up behind her and the Gander flew away, and by and by they met a small pig tied by his tail to a big red balloon. And, oh, dear me, how that little pig was squeaking! And then, all of a sudden:

> Dickory, dickory dare,
> The pig flew up in the air;
> The man in brown soon brought him down,
> Dickory, dickory dare.

Yes, sir! The man in brown fitted an arrow to his bow and punctured a great hole in the red balloon, and then, of course, it came tumbling down, and so did the little pig. And wasn't it lucky that there was

a big haystack for him to fall onto? Well, I guess it was, for if there hadn't been there would be nothing more to write about Piggie except his epitaph.

"Who tied that poor pig to the balloon?" asked Mother Goose, for by this time the Gander had come down to the meadow with his two passengers.

"I think it was Tommy Green," answered the man in brown.

"I don't like cruel boys," said Mother Goose. "They generally grow up to be bad men."

"That's true," said the man in brown, taking off his cap and scratching his head reflectively.

"And isn't he the Tommy Green who drowned the poor pussy cat in the well?"

"I think he is," answered the man in brown, and when Tommy Green heard this, he started to run away.

"Stop, stop!" cried Mother Goose. "Why did you tie that little pig to your balloon?"

"I just wanted to see him fly," answered Tommy Green, and he twisted about uneasily, for Mother Goose scowled. Oh, my, didn't she scowl at him!

"Supposing a big giant had tied you to a monstrous kite," said the man in brown to Tommy Green. "How would you have liked it?" And then he pinched that bad boy's ear to make him remember what he said.

"Will you promise to treat all animals kindly hereafter?" said Mother Goose.

"Yes, ma'am," said naughty Tommy Green.

"Then run home and tell your mother that you met Mother Goose to-day and that she gave you a good scolding for being cruel to a little pig."

And in the next story you shall hear how Mother Goose and Puss, Junior, went home with the man in brown.

LULLABYS

WELL, after the bad boy who had tied the little pig to his balloon had promised Mother Goose to be kind to all animals in the future, the Gander, who hadn't spoken a word all this time, said to the dear old lady:

"I feel very tired. I don't think I can fly another mile to-night."

"Come home with me," said the man in brown. "I have a cozy house and my wife is a good cook. There is enough and to spare for us all." So Mother Goose, Puss, Junior, and the tired Gander followed the man in brown, and by and by they came to a neat-looking little house.

"Do you hear her singing?" he asked, and he opened the little white gate very carefully.

"Sleep, baby, sleep;
Our cottage vale is deep.
The little lamb is on the green,
With woolly fleece so soft and clean.
Sleep, baby, sleep."

"My good woman is putting the baby to sleep," said the man in brown. "She sings that selfsame

song to him every evening and he always goes to sleep."

"Sleep, baby, sleep,
Down where the woodbines creep.
Be always like the lamb so mild,
A kind and sweet and gentle child.
Sleep, baby, sleep."

"'S-s-sh!" said the man in brown, tiptoeing up the steps of the little front porch, over which the honey-

suckle trailed its perfumed flowers. "Tiptoe so as not to wake the baby." So Puss, Junior, slipped off his red-top boots and Mother Goose walked softly on her toes and the Gander waddled as gently as he could on his big flat pink feet, and while they all crept quietly through the hall to the kitchen, the sweet voice became lower and lower:

"Be always like the lamb so mild,
A kind and sweet and gentle child.
Sleep, baby, sleep."

The kettle on the kitchen stove was singing its own sweet song, and the canary-bird in his gold cage whistled softly now and then.

"Be seated," said the man in brown. "My good woman will be here shortly, for when her voice grows soft and low I know the baby has fallen asleep." And of course he knew, for in a few minutes the good woman came tiptoeing into the room.

"I wish you had only come sooner, so that my little one could have met you, dear Mother Goose," she said, and then she turned to Puss, who was sitting on a chair with his right leg crossed over his left knee. "And here is dear Puss, Junior. We have a story-book all about his father, the famous Puss in Boots, and then she picked up our little traveler and held him on her lap, and sang, oh, so softly:

"Sleep, little pussy cat, sleep;
Let the little mouse creep.
Sleep, little pussy cat, sleep."

DAPPLE GRAY

WHEN Puss woke up the next morning Mother Goose had already flown away on her Gander, so he started off on foot, and by and by he came to a place where the road turned to the right and to the left at the same time! Wasn't that queer? And one sign-post said "To Raspberryville," and the other "To Lollypoptown." And while he stood wondering which way to turn a little Rocking-Horse whose name was Dapple Gray came up the road, and when he saw Puss, Junior, he said:

"I'm a little Rocking-Horse whose name is Dapple Gray,
So jump into my saddle and ride a mile away.
You need not use a whip or lash, for I will go so fast
You'll think you're on a train of cars
That whiz the stations past."

And of course Puss jumped into the saddle and rode off, down the road to the right until they came to a bridge where the tollman charged him a penny to cross.

"Why do you charge a penny?" asked Puss. "It seems to me a farthing is enough." But the tollman

said no, and so Puss took out a penny. I suppose they charged a penny because he was riding Dapple Gray. Don't you think so?

Well, by and by, after they had gone for maybe a mile or more they came to an old Gander who was standing near the road, quacking like a steam radiator out of order.

"Goosey, Goosey Gander, why do you quack?" asked Puss, pulling up Dapple Gray until he stood

on his hind legs and pawed the air with his front hoofs.

"Because I'm sorrowful," said the old Gander. "I made a bad mistake after leaving you."

"Tell me about it," said Puss, and got down from his pony and tickled the poor miserable Gander under his chin. But even then he wouldn't smile.

"Well, you see, I wandered up-stairs, and just as I was standing outside my master's door somebody took me by the left leg and threw me down-stairs. Were you ever thrown down-stairs, Sir Cat?" And the poor old Gander looked at Puss as much as to say it was an awful thing to have happen to one.

"Yes, I was," replied the little traveler. "Cinderella's cruel sisters once knocked me down their cellar stairs and shut me up in the cellar. That was even worse than what happened to you, for I didn't get out for a long time, and, oh, my, it was dark in that damp cellar!"

When the old Gander heard this he brightened up a bit.

"Yes," went on Puss, seeing he was making the old Gander feel better by talking about himself, "I would still be there, I think, if Cinderella hadn't opened the cellar door."

THE NEAT LITTLE CLOCK

ONE fine morning as Puss, Junior, and Goosey, Goosey Gander, who had carried him through the air for many miles, alighted near a little red school-house, they heard the teacher say:

"There's a neat little clock,
In the school-room it stands,
And it points to the time
With its two little hands.

"And if any scholar
Is found in disgrace,
This dear little clock
With its hands hides its face."

And just then the teacher looked up and saw little Puss, Junior, and Goosey Gander at the door. So the teacher stepped from the platform and walked down the aisle in the center of the school-room. "How do you do?" he said, but he didn't ask them in. And I'll tell you the reason. He was the same teacher who taught the school that Mary went to,

and of course you know what happened when she took her lamb to school.

"I cannot ask you in, my friends," he said, "for

I'm afraid it will make the children laugh and play, and they must study hard to-day, for school-days will be over soon, a few weeks off, the first of June!"

And then one of the boys began to sing:

"Here's a pussy cat and a goose.
I'll study no more, for what's the use?
If cats and geese are coming to school,
I'll have fun and break every rule."

And up he jumped and threw his spelling-book at another boy and hit him on the ear, and, oh, dear me! there was a terrible time in that school-room for the next few minutes! The teacher ran back and took hold of that boy and shook him by the collar, and some of the little girls screamed, and the little clock stopped ticking right away and covered its face with its hands. I suppose it just couldn't bear to see such a dreadful sight. And then it began to strike, one, two, three, four, five, and it wouldn't stop. Louder and louder it struck the time, until the children became so frightened that they sat perfectly still. They didn't dare whisper, and when it was all quiet again the little clock stopped and turned its hands back to the right time and began to tick away as peacefully as ever.

Then little Puss, Junior, and Goosey Gander slipped away unnoticed, for they were afraid to make a noise lest the children should laugh.

THE MOON COW

ONE day, as Puss, Junior, was swiftly traveling along on Goosey Gander's back, he saw a pretty girl carrying a milk-pail, so he told his feathered steed to fly down to the meadow, and then gallant little Puss helped the pretty girl carry the milk-pail. But as soon as she reached the farm-yard Goosey Gander flew up on the roof of the old red barn, for he was afraid of the farmer's big black dog who lived in a little house close by.

"Have you been to the moon lately?" asked the pretty farmer's daughter. "Maybe you saw our spotted cow."

Puss looked puzzled, for he didn't know there were any cows in the moon. And neither did I, although I've heard of the Cow who Jumped Over the Moon.

"Well, listen to me," said the pretty farmer's daughter, and she began to sing this song:

"Oh, children dear, you have heard the tale
Of the cow that jumped over the moon,
But you've never heard how that bovine bird,
As the dish ran away with the spoon,
Was caught by the Man in the Moon.

"Well, just as she flew o'er its silver top
The Man with a big lassoo
Leaned over the brim where the sky was dim
And threw it around her shoe,
So what could the poor cow do?

"And since that night when the moon is bright
You can see the Milky Way,
Which the big Moon Man with his milking-can
Has sprinkled with curds and whey,
All wrinkled and crinkled like spray.

"Oh, the little stars blink and they twinkle and drink,
And the old cow gives a moo,
As the Man in the Moon with his silver spoon
Travels the whole sky through,
Sprinkling the milky dew."

And then the farmer's daughter sighed, for she was very fond of the spotted cow, and of course she didn't believe the Man in the Moon would ever let her come back, for how was he to make green cheese without milk and cream?

"The last time I saw the Cow that Jumped Over the Moon," said little Puss, Junior, "she had the rheumatism and could only dance a little bit. She didn't dare try to jump over the moon, although the cat played on the fiddle and the little dog barked and the dish ran away with the spoon just as they did the first time. But of course this is New Mother Goose Land and everything here is so different, even Mother Goose Rhymes." After that he said good-by to his faithful comrade Goosey, Goosey Gander, who had to go to Mrs. Goose and the little goslings.

THE A B C SCHOOL

"I WONDER," sighed little Puss, Junior, to himself as he trudged merrily along a dusty road in New Mother Goose Land, "how much farther I shall have to go before I find the way to Fairy-land?" And the little traveler sighed again as he curled his whiskers and shifted his hat to the back of his head. "Whew! I'm hot!"

"Well, it's a very warm day," cried a voice close at hand, and Puss, Junior, turned and saw a small boy with his school-books on his arm.

"A diller, a dollar,
An eight-o'clock scholar.
What makes you come so late?
You used to come at ten o'clock,
But now you come at eight,"

sang a little bird, but who the little bird is I'll tell you in another story, for I don't know his name. But I'll find out, I promise you.

"Helloa, Puss, Junior!" cried the little boy. "I remember you—oh, a long time ago! It was in Old Mother Goose Country, and you came to our schoolhouse the day Mary's little lamb made the children laugh and play."

"What's your name?" asked Puss, for to tell the truth he didn't remember the small boy in the least.

"Little Tommy Tucker, who sings for his supper," and then he sat down on a stone and undid his book-strap. And then he pulled out a book, and what do you think was the name of it? Why, *Old Mother Goose Nursery Rhymes.* And when Puss saw that he sat down beside the little boy to read the dear old nursery rhymes over again, for he was fond of them, oh, my, yes! just the way every little boy and girl is, and grown-up folks, too. And the little bird perched himself on the top of the book and sang a little song, and this is the way it went:

"A boy and a cat with a feather in his hat
Sat down by the road to read a book,
And a little yellow bird, whose name you haven't heard,
Perched himself on the cover so he could have a look.

"Oh, don't you hear the bell of the school-house in the dell
Ringing out its merry ding, ding, dong?
Little boy, you'd better be a-saying A, B, C.
You must hurry or you'll disobey my song."

And then, of course, the little boy jumped up and ran to school as fast as he could, and the little bird smiled—because little birds can, you know—and after that he said good-by to Puss, Junior, who set out to find the road to Fairy-land. He had lost his way in New Mother Goose Land. But please don't let this worry you, for I shall tell you soon, although I sha'n't promise to in the next story, how he finds the Fairy-land we all love.

FAIRY-LAND

ONE bright morning, as Puss, Junior, was traveling through a deep forest he came to a wide river, and as he stood on the bank, wondering how he was to cross, a blue-breasted pigeon flew up and said: "Master Puss, Junior, across this river is Fairy-land. Would you visit this land of dreamy fancies?"

"I would indeed," he replied. "I have traveled long in Mother Goose Country. Let me see Fairy-land before I return to my father's castle."

"You shall have your wish," replied the blue-breasted pigeon, and she whistled a tune and pretty soon a little boat drew up to the bank in which were four snow-white ducks with gold oars.

"Jump in and they will row you over to the other side," said the blue-breasted pigeon, and then she flew away.

So Puss did as he was told, and after the little boat was well out in the middle of the stream one of the snow-white ducks said to him:

"Have you never been in Fairy-land, Sir Cat?"

"Just over the border once upon a time, not so very long ago," replied Puss. "I remember I crossed a

gingerbread bridge and went into a forest where a wicked witch lived in a gingerbread house."

"Ah," said the snow-white duck, "'twas the witch who made prisoners of Hansel and Gretel"

"The very same," answered Puss. "But tell me, is Fairy-land really a place of dreams?"

"Not at all," said the snow-white duck, and he

feathered his oar like an old sailor; and if you don't know what "feathering" an oar is, just ask any old sailor on the dock and he'll tell you. "Fairy-land is as real as any land, only many people don't know the way there." And then he bent to his oar and so did the three other ducks, and pretty soon they landed the little boat on the beach.

"Here is a gold feather," said the same snow-white duck, and he searched among his tail feathers until he found a gold one, and you may well believe it was well hidden, for Puss hadn't noticed it before. "Take this gold feather and place it in your cap and it will keep you from harm."

"What shall I give you in return?" said Puss.

"Have you a story-book?" asked the snow-white duck. "My comrades and I often have long waits before a traveler appears." And would you believe it, Puss had a book all about himself in his knapsack. "Here is a little book," said he, and he handed to the snow-white duck *The Adventures of Puss in Boots, Junior*, and then that duck sat right down in the boat and read it all through to his comrades, and when he reached the end Puss was far away upon his first trip into Fairy-land.

Well, by and by he came to a stately castle built upon a high rock, so Puss mounted the stone steps that were hewn in the gray granite, and after a while, not so very far, he reached the postern gate.

And in the next story you shall hear who was the owner of the castle and what happened to Puss.

THE GOLDEN APPLES

NOW in the story before this I left little Puss, Junior, knocking upon the gate of a stately castle. Well, after he had knocked three times it was opened and the porter said:

"What do you wish, Sir Cat?" for when he saw the golden feather in our little traveler's cap he thought Puss was of royal blood.

"I am seeking adventure," replied Puss, Junior. "Is the lord of this castle within?"

"He is, indeed," replied the porter, "but at the moment he is much disturbed," and then, all of a sudden, the lord himself appeared.

"Another of my golden apples has been stolen," he cried, and then he looked at Puss.

"Well, I'm glad I have only just arrived," said Puss, with a grin, "otherwise you might think I was the thief."

"No, indeed," said the lord of the castle, "I should never think that. But, come with me to my orchard, and I will show you my wonderful golden apples."

"I once saw a tree that bore silver fruit," said Puss.

"Do you remember the tree that grew in the yard of Little Two-Eyes?"

But the lord of the castle was too intent upon counting the golden apples upon his trees to reply.

So Puss didn't repeat his question, but walked under one of the trees, and, would you believe it? an apple on a low-hanging bow fell off and stuck on the golden

feather in Puss, Junior's, cap. And when the lord of the castle saw this he was so surprised that he didn't know what to do.

And then Puss said to him, "My lord, let me watch in your orchard to-night and maybe I will find who it is that steals your golden fruit."

So when evening came Puss seated himself in a dark corner and waited, and by and by, when the moon was full and the sky bright with stars, he heard a flutter of wings and a beautiful silver-feathered bird flew into a tree and plucked off a golden apple.

"Stop! stop!" cried Puss, and he waved the golden feather which he had taken from his cap, and when the silver bird saw that golden feather, which shone like a flame, it was so dazzling, she dropped the golden apple. And then she sank to the ground, for her wings would not carry her farther.

"Do not kill me, Sir Cat!" she cried. "Your golden feather burns like fire. I will promise to steal no more apples."

"Will you bring back the one you stole last night?" asked Puss, and the bird replied, "Surely I will, if you take away your golden feather, for it blinds my eyes."

So Puss hid his feather under his coat and pretty soon the silver bird flew away, and by and by she returned, bringing in her beak the stolen apple.

And in the next story you shall hear what the lord of the castle did for Puss.

THE MAGIC GOLD RING

NOW the lord of the castle was so pleased when Puss gave him the golden apple that was stolen by the silver bird, as I told you in the last story, that he presented Puss, Junior, with a snow-white horse. And after that Puss rode away, down the steep path from the castle, until he came to a green meadow; and as his horse was thirsty, he let him drink in the little stream that flowed by, and while he stood there, resting the reins upon his horse's neck, a little fairy dressed all in green suddenly appeared from beneath a buttercup and said to him:

"Did you say to the blue-breasted pigeon that Fairy-land was only a dream country?"

"Not exactly," replied Puss, "I asked her if there was really a Fairy-land."

"Well, now you have seen it for yourself," said the little fairy. "But come with me, for I would show you the Fairy Glade in yonder wood." And then she flew up and sat beside Puss, for she had little wings of gauze, you know, and could fly as well as any bird. Well, by and by, they came to a lovely spot in the woods where a band of fairies were dancing in a ring,

in the center of which was a throne made all of roses. And in the midst of the lovely flowers sat the Queen of the fairies, and she was very beautiful, and when she saw Puss, Junior, she waved her wand and all

her little subjects stopped dancing and stood around him.

And do you know, when she waved her wand that Puss and his snow-white horse grew smaller and smaller until they were no larger than the little fairies themselves. But Puss didn't feel himself grow small. No, indeed. He didn't even know he was so little,

and he jumped off his horse and bowed very low before the lovely fairy Queen.

"Ah, my noble Sir Cat," she said, "I see you wear the golden feather." And then Puss related to her how he had got it, and then he told her how much he wished to see all of Fairy-land.

"I will help you," she said. "You must beware of ogres and giants, for they are cruel. Here is a little ring. Wear it; and when you are in trouble turn it three times round your finger and I will send you aid."

And then she placed on Puss, Junior's, little toe the ring, and after that he said good-by and mounted his horse and rode away.

Well, by and by he came to a great cave where sat the giant called Redeye, and, oh dear me, he was a wicked-looking giant. His hands were as big as palm-leaf fans, and his feet as long as rowboats, and his legs as long as a telegraph-pole, and his eyes as large as plates, and his mouth as large as a shark's, and in his right hand he held a club full of sharp-pointed nails, and in his left hand he grasped a knife as big as a scythe.

Now it's too bad I must stop just at this exciting part, for I know you are almost as frightened as Puss was; but there is no more room in this story for another word, but I'll promise you one thing, and that is I won't let that dreadful giant hurt little Puss, Junior

THE TREMENDOUS GIANT

NOW when the great, big tremendous giant I told you about in the last story saw Puss, Junior, he made a dreadful sound, and all the leaves fell off the trees and the great cave echoed like a drum. But Puss wasn't afraid. He was quite used to giants, you know, for had he not rescued the little yellow hen that laid the golden eggs from the Giant of the Beanstalk? So he answered the giant's roar with as loud a voice as he could muster, but it only sounded like a whisper beside the sound the giant made.

"Ho-ho, he-he, and a pot of gold,
And a barrel of wine so mellow and old,
And a meerschaum pipe are the things for me,
So take care, Sir Cat. Ho-ho, he-he!"

"Ho-ho, ha-ha! How brave are you,
But look out, my friend, or I'll bite you in two,
Or your tail right off, though it make me cough."

And this made Puss so angry, because he thought the giant was making fun of him, you know, that he pricked the giant's great leg with the tip of his

sword. And then that giant gave a terrible yell, for I guess it hurt worse than a mosquito bite. And then he raised his great club and swung it around in

the air, and the end of it caught on a limb of the tree and broke it off.

"See what I can do?" said the giant, with a horrible grin.

"Oh, let's be friends," said Puss. "I didn't come here to fight. I'm seeking adventure and this is my

first trip to Fairy-land." And this so pleased the giant that he began to smile, and then he began to laugh, and the tears rolled down his cheeks and made a little brook that ran off down the side of the hill until it reached the great big bounding blue ocean. Wasn't that wonderful?

"Come into my cave and I'll show you some strange things," said the giant.

"Will you promise not to hurt me?" asked Puss.

"I won't harm a hair on your body," said the giant. "Here's my hand," and he stretched it out; and, would you believe it? his fingers went around Puss, Junior's, waist about three times and maybe more. And then the giant carried Puss into his cave and sat him down in his big arm-chair, which was almost as big as the summerhouse on my grandmother's front lawn.

"Now, little cat, I will show you my diamond ring," and the giant took out of his bureau drawer a ring which was as big around as a saucer and the diamond as big as a cup.

And then he took his watch out of his pocket, and, goodness me! it was as big as a dishpan and it ticked so loud that Puss couldn't hear himself think. And just then there came a knocking at the door of the cave.

And in the next story you shall hear who was there.

THE FORTUNE-TELLER

"WHO'S that?" roared the giant when he heard the knocking on his front door, as I told you in the last story, and then he opened the door, and who do you suppose was standing outside? A little dwarf all dressed in red, with a high peaked hat upon his head.

"What do you want?" asked the giant, for he didn't like the dwarf, and neither did the dwarf like the giant, you know.

And then Puss ran out to see what was the matter, and the little dwarf said, "Come here, Puss, Junior; I want to whisper in your ear." And when the giant heard this he made a grab for Puss, but the little cat was too quick for him and darted out of the cave. And it was a good thing he did, for the giant really was a bad man and very likely would have done him some harm, and that was the reason the little dwarf had come after Puss.

"Come with me," said the dwarf, and he led Puss down the hillside till they came to a great hollow tree.

"This is my home," said the dwarf, and he opened a little secret door in the side of the old tree and

beckoned Puss to follow him. And then he closed the door, and just then they heard a dreadful noise of breaking branches, and the wicked giant came tearing

through the forest. But he couldn't find them, for they were safely inside the old hollow tree and the door didn't show the least little bit.

Well, pretty soon the giant went away, so Puss said good-by to the little dwarf and went upon his way. And by and by he came to a little cottage where lived

an old woman who told fortunes. So Puss went in and asked her to tell him what was going to happen to him. So the old woman said, "Give me your right forepaw and I'll tell you.

"You will live to be a very old cat, and some day you will have a lot of money. Your father is very famous and lives in a great castle with a moat around it. And his master is a good lord and his lady a lovely woman."

"You are right," said Puss. "You are indeed a wonderful fortune-teller." And he gave her a gold piece and then he went upon his way; and by and by he heard the sound of wheels, and, looking back, he saw a splendid coach approaching drawn by four milk-white horses with gold harness and waving plumes.

And when the coach came up, the driver drew in his steeds and the lady who was riding inside called out:

"Come here, little Puss in Boots." So Puss stepped up to the side of the coach and the lady asked him to get inside, "for," said she, "it is dusty traveling on the road."

And after they had gone for maybe a mile or more a band of robbers rushed out of the woods and surrounded the coach, and then they took the lovely lady and Puss prisoners and carried them off to their hiding-place in the woods.

And in the next story you shall hear something very strange, but you must wait until then, for I don't know myself just now how Puss and the lovely lady will ever be able to escape.

PUSS MAKES A RESCUE

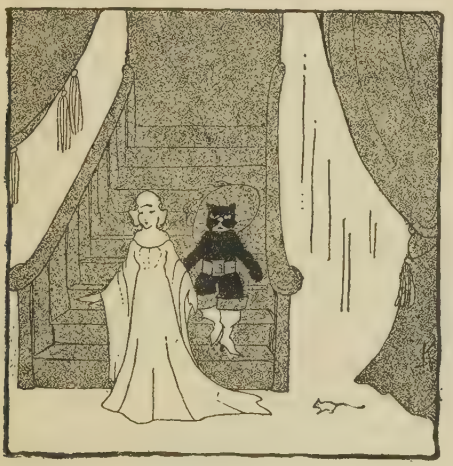
YOU remember in the last story that Puss and the lovely lady who was riding in her coach were made prisoners by the robbers. Well, those wicked robbers led them deep into the forest, and by and by, after a long time, they came to the place where the robbers lived. And, oh dear me! wasn't it a dreadful, lonely place. There was a great high wall all around the old castle, and the robbers took the lovely lady and locked her in a room and put Puss down in the cellar. And after that they sat around their table and drank and smoked and made merry, for they knew they would get a great ransom for her and Puss.

Well, after a little while Puss heard a tiny voice say to him:

"Though I'm but a little mouse
Living in the robbers' house,
I can help you to be free,
If you'll leave it all to me."

And then a little gray mouse crept out and stood before him. "Follow me," she said; and when she reached the door she nibbled away the wooden lock.

And then he and the little mouse crept up-stairs to the room where the lovely lady was, and the little mouse nibbled the lock on the door and Puss pushed it open,



and then he and the lovely lady tiptoed down the stairs and out into the great forest, only, of course, they first thanked the kind little mouse for all she had done for them.

And, oh, my! wasn't it dark in that great forest, for it was night-time, you know, and the moon hardly shone through the thick tree-tops. But by and by they saw a little light ahead, and pretty soon they came to the cottage of an old wood-cutter; but he was so fast asleep that he didn't wake up until Puss knocked on his door with a big stick.

And when the wood-cutter saw the lovely lady he said:

"My Princess, what brings you here?" And when she told him what had happened he made a soft bed for her to lie on, and the next morning he took them to her castle.

And when the lovely lady's father, who was a king, you know, heard what had happened and how Puss, Junior, with the aid of the kind little mouse had saved his daughter, he promised to give Puss a small kingdom to rule over, for not far from there was a place where there were many fairy cats. But Puss said he must be on his way, for he was a traveler, and a traveler, you know, may not linger long in one place. So he said good-by and started off, and by and by he came to a great lake where lived a water sprite. And all the fishes were her subjects and she ruled them wisely.

And when one of her fishes saw Puss standing on the beach, he brought over a little boat and took Puss to the island in the middle of the lake where the water sprite had her castle.

And in the next story you shall hear what Puss did on the island in the middle of the beautiful lake.

THE WATER SPRITE

WELL, as soon as Puss, Junior, landed on the water sprite's island, as I mentioned in the last story, the little fish swam away with the boat and Puss was left all alone on the beach. But he wasn't afraid, for he knew the water sprite was a good fairy. So he set out to find her castle, and by and by he saw it in the distance. And, oh, wasn't it a pretty one! It was made of glass and shone like diamonds in the sun.

And when he came closer he saw that a moat led from the lake right up to the castle walls, and as he stood on the bank waiting for some one to speak to him, the bridge, which was lifted up at the farther end, was lowered, and he heard a voice say, "Cross over, Sir Cat!"

So Puss did as he was bid and pretty soon he stood at the gates at the farther end, and then, all of a sudden, they swung open, and the lovely water sprite herself stood before him.

"Welcome, little Puss, Junior," she said. "I'm going out for a ride in my turtlemobile. Won't you come with me?" So Puss jumped into her strange

boat, for it was really a turtle, you know, with seats on his back, and then away they went down the silver moat until they came to the big lake. And then, all

of a sudden, they noticed a band of fairies on the bank running back and forth in a most excited manner.

"What can be the matter?" asked the lovely water sprite. "Hurry, Chauffeur Billy Bullfrog! I must find out what is causing so much disturbance." I didn't think to tell you before that she had a bullfrog for a chauffeur; and he was a very funny-looking

frog, too, and every once in a while he would turn around and wink at Puss, Junior.

"Oh, your Majesty," cried the fairies as the water sprite landed on the mossy bank, "our enemy the beetles is invading our woods."

"Where is Lionel and his fairy lancers?"

"They are guarding the glen, your Majesty," answered the fairies. "But one of his couriers says he fears Lionel will not be able to hold out."

For an instant the water sprite was at a loss to know what was best to do. "Why not ask the captain of the blue dragon-flies to help us?" said Puss, Junior.

"The very thing," cried the water sprite, and, jumping into her turtlemobile with Puss, she instructed Chauffeur Billy Bullfrog to set out at once for the island where the blue dragon-flies had their home. In less time than I can tell it to you Captain Blue Bottle, for that was the name of the blue dragon-fly captain, summoned his lancers and set out to fight with the hostile beetles. And then a great battle commenced, and the air was full of whirring wings, and pretty soon brave Lionel and his lancers, with the help of Captain Blue Bottle's dragons, routed the beetles and the fight was over.

And after that Puss set out once more upon his journey of adventure and in the next story you shall hear what happened.

THE THREE BEARS

YOU remember in the last story I told you about a battle between the fairies and the beetles and how Puss took a ride in the turtlemobile with the lovely water sprite.

Well, after he had gone for maybe a mile, he came to a dead tree where sat a great black raven.

"Good morrow, Sir Cat," cried the bird, and then he flew down and asked Puss where he had got his beautiful gold feather, the one, you remember, the snow-white duck had given him.

"Is it a charm that will turn away evil?"

"Yes, Sir Raven," replied Puss, Junior, "and I also have my trusty sword for him who dares molest me!" You see, Puss was using big words, but that is the way they talk in Fairy-land, you know.

"I would that I had that beautiful feather," said the raven, and he looked at it longingly with his little black eyes.

"I would not part with it," answered Puss, and then, all of a sudden, that raven darted at Puss and tried to pull the golden feather out of his cap. But Puss was too quick for him, for he drew his sword,

and then of course that wicked raven was afraid to come near him.

"I think you are a robber," said Puss, with an angry look in his eyes, for Puss had a temper, let me tell

you, and it made him provoked to have the raven try to steal his golden feather.

And then, all of a sudden, three bears came out of the wood, and one was a great big bear, and the next one was a middling-sized bear, but the third was only a little bit of a bear. Oh, my, yes! He wasn't much larger than a very small dog.

"Fly away, Sir Raven," said the great big tremendous bear, "and fly so far that we will never see

you again." And this so frightened the wicked black bird that he took to his wings and was off like a rocket. And then the tiny bear went up to Puss and said:

"Come home with us, for we have a nice little house with three nice rooms and three nice beds, and maybe we can find a place for you to sleep." For it was growing dark by this time, you know, and the woods were almost as black as the wicked raven who had just flown away.

So Puss set off with the three bears, and by and by they came to a nice little house with a red chimney on the roof and a rose-vine over the front door.

"Come in," said the middling-sized bear, and he turned the knob and opened the door, and they went inside.

And wasn't it nice? Supper was all on the table. There was a great big bowl for the great big bear, and a middling-sized bowl for the next big bear, and a little cup for the tiny bear, and all three were filled with honey, for bears love honey, you know, just as much as, and maybe more than, boys and girls love candy.

And in the next story you shall hear what happened after that.

THE FROG KING

YOU remember in the last story that Puss, Junior, was in the house of the Three Bears. Well, after supper, they all sat round a table and played tiddledy-winks and when it was time for bed, the Great Big Bear said:

"You can sleep with me, Puss, if you like." But Puss said, "You are so big, I'm afraid you might roll on me." And this made the bear laugh so hard that the tears rolled down his cheeks.

And then the Middling-sized Bear said, "You can sleep with me if you wish."

But, oh dear me! Puss thought he was much too big.

And then the Teeny Weeny Littlest Bear said, "You can sleep with me, Puss, Junior."

And so Puss went up with him to his little room and was soon fast asleep. And when morning came they all had breakfast, and after that Puss started out on his travels once more, and after a while he came to a place that was very marshy, and right on top of a big mound of earth sat an immense bullfrog. And he was singing away as loud as he could:

"Umpty, umpty, umpty dunk,
I'm king of this beautiful pond,
Oh yes, I am king of every nice thing
That is near and a little beyond."

And as soon as he saw Puss, Junior, he stood up and waved a long bullrush. "Welcome, Sir Cat," he said,

and then he made a low bow. And I guess he would have commenced to sing again only Puss asked him what was the name of the kingdom over which he ruled.

"It's the Kingdom of Sealand," replied the frog. "And not far from here lives a terrible water-snake. He is my greatest enemy."

And then the Frog King looked at Puss as if he were nearly frightened to death just because he had spoken out loud about that dreadful snake.

"Let me help you," said Puss. "I will take my trusty sword and kill this enemy of yours."

"Oh, you never could," answered the Frog; "he is very strong and wicked."

"Leave that to me," said Puss. "Only direct me to him."

So the Frog King told Puss which way to go, and after a little while Puss came to the place where the terrible water-snake lived. And wasn't it lucky, he was at home, and as soon as he saw Puss he gave a dreadful hiss and coiled himself up in a ring, and if Puss hadn't hit him over the head with his sword, I'm afraid something dreadful would have happened to the little traveler. Well, Puss was about to turn away, when the snake lifted up his head and said in a very weak voice:

"Sir Cat, why did you strike me? I never harmed you."

And in the next story you shall hear what Puss replied.

THE SNAKE PRINCE

NOW Puss felt very sorry when the snake asked him why he had struck him with his sword, as I told you in the last story, and for a moment he didn't know what to say.

And then the snake said, "I'm not really a snake, but a prince who has been turned into this ugly shape by a wicked witch." And then Puss felt dreadfully sorry for what he had done, and he turned to the poor snake and said:

"Tell me how I may help you, for I am indeed sad to think that I struck you with my sword."

"Touch me with your golden feather," said the snake. And would you believe it, as soon as Puss did what the snake asked him, that snake turned into a handsome prince.

"Now come with me to my castle," he said, and then he and Puss set out together, and by and by, after they had gone for some distance, Puss saw a stately castle on a high rock.

"Ah me," said the handsome Prince, "I hope nothing evil has befallen my parents during my absence," and he ran up the stone steps that led to

the castle and threw open the doors. But, alas! there was no one within. All was empty except for a little gray mouse that ran across the floor.

"Stop," cried Puss. "Tell me where my lord and

lady have gone?" But the little mouse was so frightened that he did not stop, but popped into a hole in the wall. So Puss went over and called out, "Pray tell me, little gray mouse, where have my lord and lady gone?" And then the little mouse re-

plied, because he was safely inside his house, you know, "A band of wicked robbers have carried them away for a ransom." And when the handsome Prince heard that, he was overcome with grief and threw himself down on a couch and wept.

"Cheer up, my friend," said Puss. And then he turned his little gold ring around his toe three times, and, all of a sudden, quicker than a wink, a little fairy flew in through the door.

"What is your wish, Sir Cat?" she asked. And at first Puss was too surprised to reply, until he remembered that the fairy Queen who had given him the ring, you know, had told him it was a magic ring and if he turned it around his toe three times help would come to him.

"Tell me where the lord and lady of this castle are imprisoned?" said Puss.

"Come, I will show you," replied the Fairy, and she led Puss and the Prince out of the castle and into the forest. And by and by she began to sing:

"Fairies, fairies, one and all,
Hasten when you hear me call."

And then a band of fairies appeared, some on butterflies and others on little birds.

And in the next story you shall hear what happened after that.

BACK TO MOTHER GOOSE LAND

YOU remember in the last story that a band of fairies came to help Puss and the Prince find the King and Queen. Well, just as the fairies appeared a great oak-tree spread out two of its limbs like a pair of arms, and two of its great roots turned into legs, and the next thing that happened was a tremendous great giant stood before them. "What may I do to help you?" asked Giant Oak-tree, and then all the little fairies began to sing:

"Help us, giant, great and strong,
The Prince has need of you.
We are afraid, so lend your aid,
Bring back his parents true."

"I will," roared Giant Oak-tree, and all the leaves in the forest rustled with the sound of his great voice.

And after that he stretched forth one of his long arms and pointed to a little hut that was half hidden in the trees.

And then Puss and the Prince and all the little fairies ran forward, and when they looked into the

window there sat the King and Queen chained to the wall.

"Now," said Puss, "I will test the magic of my golden feather," and he pressed it against the lock

on the door, and in a twinkle of an eye it sprang open. And after that he touched the chains that bound the King and Queen and in a moment they were free.

And then they heard a voice that sounded like the wind among the leaves. It was the voice of Giant

Oak-tree telling them to hasten away, for he could see from his topmost branches the robbers returning.

And then the fairies changed four of their butterflies into horses so that Puss and the Prince with his parents could ride away swiftly, and in less time than I can tell it to you they were safely out of the forest and on their way home to the castle.

And the Prince was so grateful to Puss that he gave him his purse, and after that Puss said good-by and went upon his way.

"Goodness me," said Puss to himself, "I must get back to Mother Goose Country. Giants and fairies and robbers are too much for me." And he looked around to see which road to take. "I will leave it to my horse," he decided, and dropping the reins upon the neck of his snow-white horse, Puss let him take his own way, and pretty soon they came to a bridge that spanned a deep river.

"Give me your toll," said the man who kept the bridge.

So Puss opened the purse which he had just received from the Prince, and paid the toll-keeper, and then he crossed over, and wasn't he glad to find himself once more in dear old Mother Goose Land, for right in front of him was a post with a sign-board on which was written in large letters:

THIS IS THE ROAD TO BRANBERRY CROSS

THE SANDMAN

"THIS is the road to Branberry Cross.
I want to go there on a snow-white horse,
For there is no trolley that goes that way,
So lend me your snow-white horse, I say."

But Puss wouldn't, and I don't blame him—do you? for who do you suppose asked him to? It was the Knave of Hearts who stole the tarts, and Puss wasn't going to lend his horse to anybody like that, for a thief can never be trusted, you know.

"Go 'way," said Puss, "you thieving knave." And this made the Knave of Hearts so angry that he took one of the tarts and threw it at the snow-white horse, and it made a great big red spot on his side, for it was a cranberry tart, you see, and very juicy.

And after that Puss rode away, and by and by he came to the town of Branberry Cross. And just as he was entering the village he heard the sound of bells. And then all of a sudden an old woman rode by on a horse, and she had rings on her fingers and

bells on her toes. And when she saw Puss, Junior, she cried:

"Why have you come to Branberry Cross,
Mister Puss, Junior, upon your white horse?"

"Because he needs a shoe," said Puss. "Have you a smithy in your town?"

"There's a smithy down the street
Who will shoe your horse's feet,
With a ticker, tacker, two,
He will forge for him a shoe.
Blow the bellows with a blast
Till the sparks fly thick and fast.
Ticker, tacker, ticker, two,
Now your horse has found a shoe."

"Thank you, kindly," said little Puss, Junior, and he urged his steed forward, and pretty soon, not so very long, he came to the blacksmith shop. And after his horse's shoe was on, Puss rode through the village until he came to a sign on which was written, "Shut-Eye Town!" And when Puss arrived there it was sundown and the Sandman was just getting out his bag, for he is the man, you know, who puts little children to sleep.

"Don't throw any sand in my eyes until I find a place for my horse to sleep and a bed for myself," said Puss, with a grin. So the Sandman passed them by and Puss went on until he came to a tavern called the "Cuddle Inn."

"Here is just the place," said Puss, and he gave the reins to a stable-boy and told him to give the snow-white horse a good supper, and after that Puss

went into the Inn and sat down at the supper-table. And would you believe it, he was so tired that he fell sound asleep. Perhaps the Sandman had thrown some sand in Puss, Junior's, eyes. Who knows?

"FORTUNES ARE NEVER FOUND"

YOU remember in the last story that Puss, Junior, fell asleep in Cuddle Inn, and now I'll tell you what happened when he woke up.

"What will you have for breakfast, Sir Cat?" asked the innkeeper, who was a great fat goose. And after Puss looked over the bill of fare he ordered a nice meal, and when that was finished he wiped his whiskers on the snow-white napkin.

"Are you in search of any one?" asked the innkeeper, who seemed very much interested in his pussy-cat guest.

"Does Old Mother Goose live near here?" asked Puss, lifting his hat with the golden feather from the wooden nail on the wall.

"To be sure she does," answered the innkeeper. "In yonder wood she has her home."

"Then I will call on her," said Puss, "for 'tis many months since I have seen the dear old lady." And after that he set out, and by and by he came to a nice little cottage, and the first person he saw was Mother Goose's Gander standing outside. And when he saw Puss he flapped his wings and made a great

noise, and this, of course, brought Mother Goose herself to the door.

"Little mice and ginger snaps," exclaimed the old lady, "if this isn't my little friend, Puss in Boots!"

And she picked him up and gave him a big hug, and this made Puss feel so happy that he began to purr just the way he used to do when he was a little kitten and had never worn red-topped boots nor traveled through Mother Goose and Fairy-land.

"FORTUNES ARE NEVER FOUND"

"And what is my little pussy cat doing?" asked the old lady, as she sat down on the bench outside her cottage.

"Oh, I'm seeking my fortune," replied Puss, Junior.

And then Mother Goose laughed, for she knew that any one who was searching for a fortune would never find it. "You must work, little cat," she said. "Fortunes are never found, but they are often made!" Which is very true, when you come to think of it.

Well, after Puss had spent nearly the whole day with dear Mother Goose, he set out once more on his journey, and by and by he met a pretty maid who dropped him a courtesy.

"Where are you going, my pretty maid?" asked Puss, with a bow.

"I'm seeking my fortune, Sir Cat," she replied.

"Oh, don't do that," said Puss. "Only a few hours ago Mother Goose told me one must work for a fortune." And just then a big wagon with yellow wheels drove up.

"Jump in," said the driver, "and I will take you to the city." So Puss and the pretty maid seated themselves on the front seat with the kind driver and away they went.

And in the next story you shall hear what happened after that.

BRAMBLE-BUSH TOWN

NOW let me see. What was Puss doing in the last story? Oh yes, I remember now, he was riding to town in a wagon so brown and the pretty young maid with the yellow sunshade was singing a song as they rattled along.

Dear me! Why didn't I get my typewriter to put this in verse, for it rhymes, you know, and if you don't know it, read it over, for a little bird, who was sitting on a tree, thought it a very pretty verse, and when the pretty maid sang it over again he flew after the wagon and sat himself down on the back seat and began to sing this song:

"Over the hills and far away
I must be flying every day,
For I'm as free as the breeze that blows,
Free as the brook that swiftly flows
Down the hill to the great mill-pond,
And then away to the sea beyond
The meadow bright with the morning dew,
Till it reaches the ocean deep and blue."

And then the little bird flew away. Perhaps she wanted to find out whether the sparkling brook had reached the deep-blue ocean. And perhaps she

didn't, for she might have had a nestful of little yellow birds, you know, and have gone home to feed them.

Well, pretty soon the wagon in which Puss and the pretty maid were riding entered Bramble-bush Town, and of course Puss was anxious to see the

Wisest man in all the town,
Who in the brambles tumbled down
And scratched out both his big blue eyes,
And then to every one's surprise
He jumped back in the bramble glen
And quickly scratched them in again.

And just then up came this wise man. But, oh dear me! he looked just like any other man. Why, he didn't look wise at all, and the pretty maid thought he looked stupid, so she ran into a hat-shop to buy herself a bonnet with a lot of ribbons on it, and Puss went the other way, after thanking, of course, the man who had so kindly given him a ride, and after a little while he came to a baker shop. So he went inside to buy a bun, but the baker-man didn't have any left.

"I'm very sorry, Sir Cat," he said, "but if you will come in this afternoon about five I shall have a fresh baking, and then you can buy all you wish."

"I can't wait that long," said Puss. "I'm on my way, and cannot stay, so, Mister Baker-man, good day," and away went Puss. And do you know, I think this is the first time I ever heard Puss talk in rhyme. Perhaps it was because almost every one in Mother Goose Land does, and maybe Puss was getting the habit.

"SING A SONG OF SIXPENCE"

SING a song of sixpence,
A pocket full of rye.
Four and twenty blackbirds
Baked in a pie!

When the pie was opened,
Birds began to sing.
Wasn't that a dainty dish
To set before a king?

Well, I just guess it was. And the King said to Puss, for the little traveler was in a palace, you see:

"Won't you have a blackbird?"

But of course Puss didn't know what to do with it. He couldn't eat a live blackbird, you see; and then the King began to laugh, for it was his birthday and this pie was given him instead of a cake and the blackbirds instead of candles. And maybe he wasn't the youngest king you and I ever heard of, for as there were only twenty-four blackbirds, of course the King could only be twenty-four years old.

And then one of the King's servants brought a pretty gilt cage for Puss to put his bird in, and each one of the guests had a cage, too, to put his bird in, and after that the regular feast commenced. But I'm

not going to tell you what they all had to eat, for it will make you so hungry that you will go right over to the candy-shop and get an ice-cream cone.

Well, after the feast was over they all went out in the garden, and just as they stepped outside there came a dreadful scream from the kitchen garden. And what do you suppose had happened? Why, just as one of the maids hung up some pretty pink and blue handkerchiefs on the clothes-line a blackbird flew down and bit off her nose. I suppose he was angry to think that some of his brothers and sisters had been baked in a pie, but that wasn't the poor maid's fault, was it?

So then everybody called for the court physician, and when he looked at the maid's nose he said:

"The bird didn't take off a bit. He just pinched it."

"Perhaps he thought it was a cherry," said Puss, with a grin, for the maid's nose was very red from crying, you see. But when you come to think of it, she wasn't crying before the Blackbird came, so how could it have been red? So I guess I was right when I said the Blackbird pinched her nose for spite.

Well, after that Puss went into the parlor where the Queen was eating bread and honey, and then into the counting-house where the King was counting money, for he wanted to say good-by and to thank them for his lovely Blackbird and the gilt cage. And after that he went upon his way.

And in the next story I'll tell you what the Blackbird said.

THE LITTLE OLD MAN OF THE WOOD

YOU remember in the last story that Puss was trudging along with the Blackbird in the gilt cage. Well, after a little way, not so very far, the Blackbird said:

"If you will let me out of the cage, I will show you some wonderful things."

"Will you?" said Puss, and he opened the door of the cage and out flew the Blackbird, and then he perched on Puss, Junior's, shoulder. "Throw away the cage," said the Blackbird, "it's a prison," and then he flapped his wings and commenced to sing:

"Oh, it's good to be free again,
With the flowers blooming gay,
And to follow the sun in his daily run
Ever and ever away."

And then, all of a sudden, Puss and the Blackbird came across the Little Old Man of the Wood. He was sitting just outside his house, which was a great hollow tree. Yes, there he sat smoking his pipe, and his great long white beard fell down almost to his feet. On his head was a high peaked red hat and his

suit of green was the same color as the leaves on the trees.

"Good morning, Sir Cat and Sir Blackbird," he cried in a high cracked voice. "What brings you to me?"

"I would show my friend the wonders of the forest," said the Blackbird. "He has released me from my prison cage, and in return for that I would show him our great forest."

"That you shall," replied the Little Old Man of the Wood, and he arose and beckoned them to follow. And then he led them through a door in the great hollow tree and Puss found himself in a beautiful country. And wasn't he surprised, for it seemed strange that just through a wooden tree he could enter such a wonderful place.

"This is the Kingdom of the Vegetables," said the Little Old Man of the Wood, and to Puss, Junior's, amazement he saw that all the vegetables were alive.

There stood a great corn-stalk with the largest ears you ever saw. Why, the corn-silk tassel was almost as long as the beard on the chin of the Little Old Man of the Wood.

But the ears on that corn-stalk were not like the ears on corn you see every day in the fields. Oh my, no! They were just like your ears and mine, and they could hear the snowflakes falling 'way up at the North Pole and the chatter of the monkeys in the palm-trees 'way down in the torrid zone.

"Yes, we have a wonderful kingdom," said the

Little Old Man of the Wood, and then he took Puss up to a cabbage that had a head as big as a giant's. And would you believe it, it had eyes and nose and mouth just like any man's, and then the cabbage said, "I want some corned beef for dinner," and this made Puss laugh, for cabbages he had met never ate meat, and neither did any that I ever ate, for I never met a cabbage except on the dining-table.

"Oh, the cabbage eats corned beef,
And the corn drinks lots of milk,
And, oh, he has a dreadful time
To comb his beard of silk."

And in the next story you shall hear what happened after that.

FLOWER COUNTRY

LET me see. In the last story a little yellow bird was singing a funny song about the vegetable people in the Kingdom of Vegetables. Well, after he had finished he flew down from the top of a tree and shook hands with the Blackbird, who was perched on Puss, Junior's, shoulder, for they were old friends, you know, and after that the Little Old Man of the Wood said to Puss, Junior, "After we have seen the Flower Country you can resume your journey of adventure." So he led Puss and the Blackbird through an opening in a great hedge and Puss found himself in a most beautiful place. The bluebells were ringing such lovely chimes, and the sunflowers were shining from the blue sky just like dozens of suns in our own blue heaven, and the pitcher-plants were pouring out delicious lemonade, and the Jack-in-the-pulpits were making speeches, and the four-o'clocks were striking the hours just like regular clocks, and the forget-me-nots were saying, "Don't forget me!" and the daffy-down-dillies were saying, "We're not daffy, nor are we silly; we're just happy daffy-down-dilly."

"Now, we'll go back to my house in the old hollow tree," said the Little Old Man of the Wood, and then he showed Puss all over his tree-men-dous house, as

he called it, and you would have been surprised to see how large it was. For the halls were in the great hollow limbs and the dining-room was up high in the big trunk, and all the other rooms were here and there and everywhere.

"My, but you have a big house!" said Puss. "But I must be on my way, for he who tarries much too long will never finish his journey song."

"What song is that?" asked the Little Old Man of the Wood. And then Puss commenced to sing:

"Oh I'm the cat who has traveled far
From Mother Goose Land to the Twinkle Star,
And from there to the Moon of nice green cheese,
Though I never ate any of it, if you please.
Over the hills and far away,
Where little Bo-Peep and her lambkins play,
And Yankee Doodle rides his pony,
With a feather in his cap of macaroni,
And the Miller who lives by the river Dee
Who looked upon his pillow and saw a naughty flea.
And still I must travel, travel far,
Till I reach a land where heroes are."

"Well, I hope you find them, Sir Cat," said the Little Old Man of the Wood, and he bade Puss good-by; and then Puss went down the forest path with the Blackbird on his shoulder, and by and by he came to the end of the forest, so he followed the King's highway until he came to a sign-post saying:

TO HERO-LAND!

And in the next story you shall hear what a wonderful adventure he had in that new land.

SIR LAUNCELOT

IN the last story we left little Puss, Junior, entering Hero-land, with his friend, the Blackbird, perched upon his shoulder and his trusty sword by his side. And I'm so glad that Puss had a sword and knew how to use it, for I'm sure all the heroes in Hero-land had swords.

Well, by and by Puss came to a great castle, and when he entered, he found himself in a large room in the center of which was a round table. And sitting around the table were many famous knights. It was the Court of King Arthur, you know, and as soon as King Arthur saw Puss, Junior, he arose and said:

"Welcome, comrade, to our court," for good King Arthur had often heard how Puss had befriended many a poor person and helped the aged and needy. And as this was what each knight pledged himself to do, they felt that Puss was really a knight. And, anyway, there was one knight among them who knew Puss, and he was none other than the famous Sir Launcelot, who once had met Puss in the forest and had taken him upon his horse and had had many adventures with him.

"Not far from here is a wicked lord," said King Arthur, "who has made captive a lovely maiden. Who will pledge himself to rescue her?" And then

Sir Launcelot arose, and so did Puss. "I will undertake it," said the good knight. "And so will I," cried little Puss, Junior. "And I will go with you both," said the Blackbird.

And then Sir Launcelot got out his great charger and mounted him, and Puss climbed up behind, and

away they went on their adventure. And by and by they came to the great gloomy castle of the wicked lord.

"Now let me offer a suggestion," said the Blackbird. "I will fly up to yonder turret window and look through the grating. It may happen that the lovely lady is locked in the turret chamber." And as this seemed a good idea to Sir Launcelot, the Blackbird spread his wings and pretty soon he alighted on the stone ledge. And then he peeked through the gratings. But it was so dark inside that for some time he could see nothing; but in a little while he heard a sigh, and then a sweet voice said: "Woe is me! Who will release me from my prison?"

"I will help you," said the Blackbird, and then he squeezed himself through the gratings and flew over to where the unhappy maiden sat. And when he told her that Sir Launcelot and Puss, Junior, were outside and that they were determined to rescue her she dried her eyes and said:

"Oh, little Blackbird, tell the noble Sir Launcelot and the brave Puss, Junior, that I will light a little candle in the church for them each day when I am free." And then she laughed a low sweet laugh, for she was happy to think that she would soon be free.

And in the next story you shall hear what happened after that.

PUSS GIVES THE SIGNAL

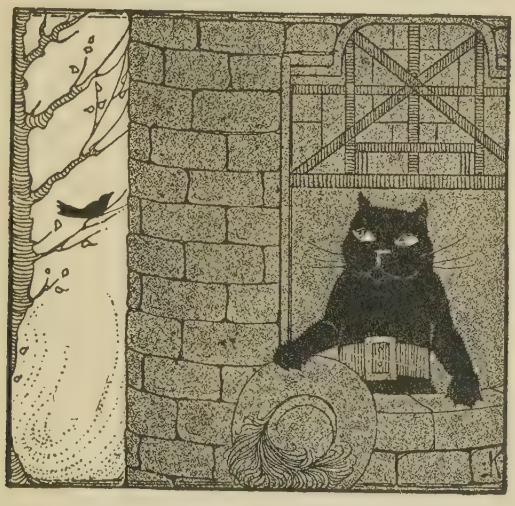
WAIT a minute until I remember where we left off in the last story. Oh yes, now I know. It was when the Blackbird whispered to the lovely maiden, who was a prisoner in the wicked lord's castle, that Puss, Junior, and the brave Sir Launcelot were outside the walls, determined to rescue her.

"We must wait until it is dark," said the Blackbird. "But keep up a brave heart!" And then he flew down to the woods where Sir Launcelot and Puss were hiding.

"I have a plan," said the Blackbird. "I will carry in my bill a ball of twine and give it to the captive maiden. She can then hold one end of the string and let the ball drop to the ground. We will then tie a strong rope to the string and she can pull it up, and then Puss, Junior, who is a good climber, can crawl up the rope and saw the iron gratings with a file."

"Ha-ha!" exclaimed the noble Sir Launcelot, "but where is the rope and twine, and who will carry the fair maiden down?" And he looked at Puss and added, "Will you agree to bring her safely down in your arms, Sir Cat?"

"I will try," said little Puss, Junior, bravely, although he felt it would be too great a task, and so do I, and so do you, unless you're a big, strong man.



"Now let me suggest a plan," said the good Sir Launcelot.

"Puss and I will call on yonder wicked lord and ask him to give us lodgings for the night. And then when all is still we will break open the door and escape with the maiden." And then he told the Blackbird to fly back and tell the maiden to be ready at midnight. And when the bird had flown away he and Puss set out for the castle, and pretty soon they reached the high wall that surrounded the great

courtyard. And then Sir Launcelot knocked upon the gate with the hilt of his sword.

"Who stands without?" asked a gruff voice.

"Sir Launcelot of the Lake and his comrade, Puss in Boots, Junior," replied the knight in a stern voice. And then the gate swung slowly open and Sir Launcelot and Puss entered, and pretty soon the wicked lord himself appeared. And, oh dear me! but he was a big, powerful man. He was even larger than Sir Launcelot and he had an evil face and his eyes were black and cruel.

"May we have lodgings for the night?" asked Sir Launcelot, and the wicked lord answered that they might, and then he took them into the great dining-hall and they all had supper together, and after that they sat around a big fire and smoked, all but Puss. He didn't smoke, of course, but sat and purred just to make the wicked lord think he was an ordinary sort of a cat dressed up in boots. And when it grew late Sir Launcelot arose and asked that he be shown to his room. And then he and Puss followed the page up the velvet stairs, and when they reached their room they locked the door; and then Puss hung his cap with the gold feather in it outside the window so that the Blackbird would see it and fly up to them.

And in the next story you shall hear of an exciting rescue.

THE PORTER WAKES UP

IN the last story, you remember, little Puss, Junior, hung his cap with the gold feather outside the window. The moon was shining brightly and the feather glittered like the flame of a torch, and pretty soon the Blackbird saw it and flew up to the window.

It was very still, for it was midnight, and off in the distance came the faint sound of a bell.

"Now is the time," said Sir Launcelot, and he opened the door very softly, while the Blackbird walked on tiptoe in front to show the way. Of course Puss and the Blackbird didn't make a bit of noise, but the great boots of Sir Launcelot made the stairs creak as he mounted them one by one, and Puss and the Blackbird whispered, "Be careful, noble knight!" But he only smiled and pressed his hand to his sword, for he wasn't afraid of anything, you know.

Well, by and by they came to the turret chamber where the lovely maiden was imprisoned and Sir Launcelot pressed his great shoulder against the door, but, oh dear me! it wouldn't open, for the iron bolt inside was even stronger than the great shoulder of Sir Launcelot. And I suppose you will think it

strange that the lovely maiden didn't get up and pull the bolt back so that the door would open; but you won't think it strange when I tell you she was chained

to her bed and could only move a little way, for the chain wasn't long, you know.

"I will fly around and enter her window and draw back the bolt," said the Blackbird, and away he went. But, oh dear and oh dear! his bill wasn't strong enough to pull that great heavy bolt even the least little bit, so he came back and told Puss to try and see what he could do. So brave little Puss,

Junior, jumped up on the window above the staircase and crawled around, oh, so carefully, on a narrow ledge, until he came to the window of the maiden's room. And then he squeezed through the iron bars. And after a great deal of hard work he pushed back the bolt and Sir Launcelot entered. And then he took his great sword and broke the chain in two, and after that they listened at the head of the stairway; and when they thought it was still again, for Puss had heard a little noise down below, they all tiptoed down the stairs and at last they reached the great front door.

But, oh dear, and oh dear again! there they saw a great big, tremendous porter fast asleep, with his club by his side. And how he was snoring! Why, it sounded like a thunder-storm, but without any rain, of course!

Well, Sir Launcelot opened the door very carefully, and then Puss and the maiden stepped outside, and the Blackbird, too, and I guess everything would have gone along nicely if the door hadn't slipped out of Sir Launcelot's fingers and closed with a slam. And this of course woke up the porter, who gave a great yell and picked up his club and started after Puss, Junior, and his friends.

And next time I'll tell you what happened after that.

THE ESCAPE

IT'S too bad that the door of the wicked lord's castle had to slam and wake the great big porter, as I told you in the last story. But Puss, Junior, and Sir Launcelot didn't wait a minute. No indeed! That noble knight picked up the lovely maiden in his arms and ran out of the courtyard, with Puss, Junior, at his heels, and pretty soon they came to the drawbridge. But, oh dear me! it was pulled up high and there was no way to get across the deep moat. And by this time every one in the castle was awake and the wicked lord himself was running toward them. So Sir Launcelot pulled out his sword and met the wicked lord with a tremendous blow. But the wicked lord's armor was strong, and he only laughed and struck at Sir Launcelot, and their swords clashed together and sparks, like stars, flew all around.

And then from the castle came all the retainers, with swords and daggers, and when Puss saw them he let down the drawbridge, and the maiden ran across, and Sir Launcelot slowly retreated before the wicked lord and his hirelings until he was upon the other side of the moat, and then he gave the wicked

lord such a blow that he fell to the ground; and as his retainers stooped to pick him up, the noble Sir Launcelot lifted the maiden in his arms and fled into

the wood, followed by Puss, Junior, and the little Blackbird.

And when they were safe among the trees the good knight set the maiden down and looked about him. But I guess the wicked lord was unable to follow, on account of the great blow Sir Launcelot had given him; and after that the maiden said: "Not far from here lies the castle of my father. I will show you the way if you will be so good as to take me there." So the good knight placed her upon his horse, and after he and Puss had also mounted they rode away, and

by and by they came to a stately castle. And when the maiden's father saw them coming he ran out and greeted them, for he had mourned for her for many days.

And didn't they have a wonderful feast that night? Well, you should have been there. Puss sat at the table, and every time a knight or a lady spoke to him they said, "Sir Cat!" And the Blackbird had a place at the table, too, and ate raisins and crumbs till he could eat no more.

And when the feast was nearly over, Puss, Junior, stood up on his chair and said:

"Noble lords and ladies,
Now harken unto me,
And I will tell you how we set
The lovely maiden free!"

And then he bowed to Sir Launcelot and the Blackbird, and began again:

"My friend, the Blackbird, found the room
Wherein this maiden wept,
And then along a narrow ledge
On all four paws I crept,
And then I jumped upon the floor
And pushed the bolt back on the door."

THE DUNGEON

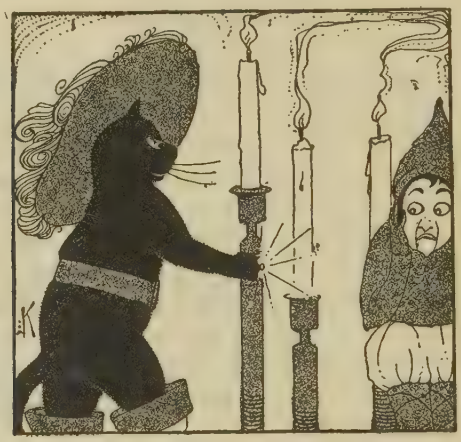
YOU remember in the last story we left off just as Puss, Junior, finished speaking to the noble lords and ladies. Well, as soon as the feast was over, Sir Launcelot bid them all good-by and returned to the Court of King Arthur, and little Puss, Junior, and his friend, the Blackbird, went upon their way, and by and by they came to a great pine-tree. It was withered and old, and its bare branches stretched up to the sky and creaked a sad refrain as the wind whistled through the forest. And right at the foot of the old dead pine-tree sat the queerest-looking little dwarf you ever saw.

He had a great hump upon his back, and his little red coat hunched up behind and his breeches were tucked into the tops of his high boots, and his cap was green, with a long, high peak to it.

What can I do for you?" asked the dwarf, and then he began to sing:

"Oh, 'way down deep below the ground
A wondrous fortune I have found:
Gold and silver, diamonds, too,
And rubies of a scarlet hue.
Come, I will show you what I've found
In my dungeon underneath the ground."

"Have a care," whispered the Blackbird. "I do not like the dwarf's looks." But Puss wasn't afraid. Oh my, no! He wasn't afraid of anything, and that is the reason, I guess, he had so many exciting ad-



ventures. And I'm glad he was so brave, for if he hadn't been these stories would have ended long ago!

Well, anyway, the dwarf turned and opened a little door in the old dead pine-tree and motioned to Puss and the Blackbird to follow. And after they had gone down a steep pair of winding stone steps they found themselves in a great cavern dimly lighted with candles.

"Over here is a great chest full of diamonds. Come and see them." So Puss and the Blackbird went over to look at the diamonds, when, all of a sudden,

just as they were leaning over the great chest, out went all the candles, leaving them in total darkness. And then a low, deep voice said:

"Underneath the ground you are,
Far from moon or sun or star;
Everlasting darkness here,
Never more will light appear."

Wasn't that a dreadful thing to hear? And the Blackbird was so frightened that he turned pale, which is a strange thing for a blackbird to do.

"Goodness me!" said Puss, aloud, and the Blackbird fluttered over and sat on his shoulder. "Now we are in a fix." And then what do you suppose Puss did? Why, he turned around three times the little magic gold ring he wore on his toe, and in a jiffy the candles were lighted and the little dwarf said, "Where did you get that ring?" And then he tried to take it from Puss, but whether he did or not you must wait to hear in the next story.

THE GREAT EGG

IN the last story, you remember, Puss, Junior, and the Blackbird were in the cavern of the little dwarf, 'way down deep underground, and when the lights went out Puss turned his magic ring around three times and then the lights appeared. And, oh yes! after that the dwarf tried to steal the ring from Puss. I suppose he thought it would be a fine thing for him to have a ring like that. But he didn't get it. For Puss wouldn't have parted with that ring for a fortune, let me tell you. And when that wicked dwarf tried to pull it away from Puss, he drew his sword and said:

"Have a care, dwarf, lest I kill you with my trusty blade." And you can well imagine the dwarf stepped out of the way, for he didn't want to be killed any more than you or I do.

"And now for your treachery," cried Puss, "give me a bagful of your diamonds!" And because the dwarf didn't go at once to get them Puss gave him a prick with the point of his sword, and then you should have seen how fast that dwarf went. And when he had

filled a little sack full of the precious stones, he handed them to Puss.

"Now lead us up to earth," and Puss gave the dwarf another prick with the point of his sword to make him

obey quickly. Well, pretty soon after that Puss and the Blackbird walked out of the little door in the old dead pine-tree, and you can well imagine they were glad once more to see the bright sunshine.

"Now let me give you a piece of advice," said Puss to the dwarf. "Don't you ever try to hurt people

who trust you, for I believe, even if I hadn't had my magic ring, that the good fairies in the forest would have saved me from you, for Good always conquers Evil." And then Puss strode away, and by and by he and the Blackbird came to a great, tremendous egg lying under a tree.

"Well, if that isn't the largest egg I ever saw!" cried the Blackbird. "It must have been a giant bird who laid it!" and he flew off Puss, Junior's, shoulder and alighted on the great egg. And then, all of a sudden, it opened with a click and in fell the Blackbird, and then it closed again with a snap, and of course the poor Blackbird was inside. Yes, indeed! He was a prisoner.

"Oh dear, oh dear!" said Puss, "will trouble never end?" and he ran over to the great egg and tried to break it with his sword. But of course he couldn't, for the shell was as hard as iron and thicker than a board.

And then a little bird began to sing:

"Hold your golden feather
Underneath the egg,
Then say, 'Tiddle dumpty,
Mary, Martha, Meg!' "

So Puss did as he was told, although it seemed very foolish to say all those names.

And in the next story I'll tell you what happened after that.

THE FAIRY DANCE

I SUPPOSE you have been waiting for me to tell you what happened to the great, tremendous egg after Puss had repeated the magic verse which the little yellow bird had told him to say. Well, this is what happened. The great, thick shell parted in the middle just as nicely as you please—well, if I must say it, it broke in two much better than my egg did this morning when I struck it with my knife—and then, of course, out jumped the Blackbird—not out of my egg, you know, but out of the great big, tremendous egg.

"My, but I had a narrow escape!" said the Blackbird, and he shook himself and flapped his wings. And then he began to sing, but not very well, you know, for he had never taken singing lessons:

"Down in the dell there's a sweet bluebell,
Ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling.
And when the breezes sing the bluebells softly ring,
Ting-a-ling, a-ling, ling, ling."

"Oh, let's go over where they are," said Puss, and he gave the Blackbird a lump of sugar; and then, of course, the Blackbird said, "Come along; follow me,"

and pretty soon they came to the dell. And, do you know, the fairies were having a dance just then. Yes, indeed, they were, and some of them were ringing the

bluebells and the harebells, and some were blowing on the horns of the honeysuckle flowers.

But, oh dear me! just then, all of a sudden, a great big, tremendous giant named Troublesome came

along, and of course the fairies disappeared, and the Blackbird would have flown away, too, only he thought too much of Puss to leave him all alone.

"Ha-ha!" cried the great giant, and he leaned over and picked up Puss and sat him on his knee, for he had seated himself on a fallen tree, you see.

"You have no right to pick me up like this," said little Puss, Junior, as bravely as he could, although I can tell you he felt dreadfully frightened.

"Oh, I won't hurt you!" said the giant, and then he put Puss in his pocket and walked away without even looking at the Blackbird. Well, after the giant had gone for maybe a mile Puss began to think it was time for him to get out of the pocket, and I suppose you think it strange Puss hadn't jumped out before; but you won't when I tell you why. You see, the giant's pocket had a flap that buttoned over the top, and so, of course, Puss couldn't undo it from the inside.

Well, pretty soon, the Blackbird flew up behind the giant and with his bill unbuttoned the pocket, and then Puss jumped out and climbed up a tree so fast that the giant only saw the tip of his tail. But that was enough, oh dear me, yes! I'm sorry to say, and then the giant pulled the tree right out by its roots.

And in the next story you shall hear what happened to Puss.

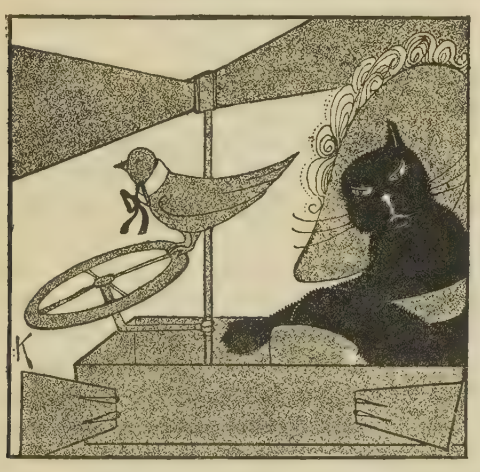
THE AIRSHIP

AS soon as the Giant pulled the tree up by the roots, as I told you in the last story, Puss, Junior, who was up in the top, you remember, jumped in the nearest tree, and then that dreadful Giant pulled that tree up by the roots; and if Puss hadn't kept on jumping from one tree to another, I guess that great, strong giant would have torn up the whole forest.

But suddenly Puss thought of his magic ring, and, giving it three turns around his finger—or his little toe, I should say—he waited for a moment before jumping into another tree, hoping the fairy Queen would come to his aid. And she did, let me tell you, for just as that awful Giant began to tear up the tree by its roots, an airship flew up to where Puss clung to the topmost branch and took him away. Yes, sir, that airship was big enough for two cats, and the pilot, who was a snow-white dove, wasn't the least bit afraid of Puss, Junior. And if you think it strange, I'll tell you why. He was one of the dove sailors on the ship with masts of gold and sails of silk that Puss once went to sea in, and the little dove

remembered Puss, and so of course he wasn't afraid of him.

Well, when the Giant found out that Puss had escaped, you can imagine how angry he was, and he lifted up the great big tree and slammed it down on the ground so hard that it made a great dent in the earth



so deep that the writer of my geography called it a ravine, but what he would have called it if he had known how it was made is more than I know.

And, oh dear me! I forgot all about the Blackbird who had helped Puss, Junior, get out of the giant's pocket in the story before this. Well, he wasn't going to be left behind, so he flew after the

airship and sat down beside Puss, and when the pilot dove looked around, he said:

"Hello, Mr. Blackbird!
Pray, how do you do?
You are not the naughty bird
Who in the garden flew
And bit the maiden's pretty nose
While she was hanging out the clothes?"

"No, I'm not," said the Blackbird. "It's my cousin who lives in Mother Goose Land."

"Glad to hear it," said the dove pilot, and then he steered the airship over to a big mountain on the top of which was a beautiful lake almost as blue as the sky.

"Here are where the king fishes live," said the dove. "And the lake is called Kingdom Blue Lake, and whenever a royal fish is caught, either in the big ocean or in the lakes and streams of the earth, some of the king fishes swim down to rule in their places."

And then the airship came down to earth and Puss got out and stood by the bank and looked into the beautiful blue waters of Kingdom Blue Lake, and while he stood there a big fish swam up to the beach. On his head was a beautiful gold crown and in his right fin a golden scepter.

And in the next story you shall hear what the King of the fishes said to little Puss, Junior.

THE KING FISH

"OH, I'm a king fish, brave and bold,
And I rule with my scepter and crown of gold,
And if any fish dare question me
I'll send him away to the big blue sea
Where the sharks and the dolphins and big whales are
And the angry waters dash on the bar,
And the rocks where the lighthouse stands so clear
Will cut him in two if he swims too near."

And after that the King fish waved his scepter and took off his gold crown and bowed very politely to Puss, Junior.

"I'm glad to meet you, Puss, Junior," said his fish majesty graciously, "for I have heard much about you from a cousin of mine who lives in the silver moat that surrounds the castle of my Lord of Carabas, where lives your famous father, Puss in Boots."

"And how is my dear father?" asked Puss, anxiously, for he had not heard from his fond parent for a long time.

"He sleeps much in the royal garden," replied the King fish, "but he is still active and strong." And then the King of the fishes said good-by and swam

away to his kingdom deep down in the beautiful blue lake.

And after that Puss thanked the dove pilot for carrying him away from the wicked Giant Trouble-

some, as I told you in the last story, and off he went once more upon his two good hind feet with their famous red-topped boots wondering what further adventures would befall him on his journey through Fairyland.

THE END

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